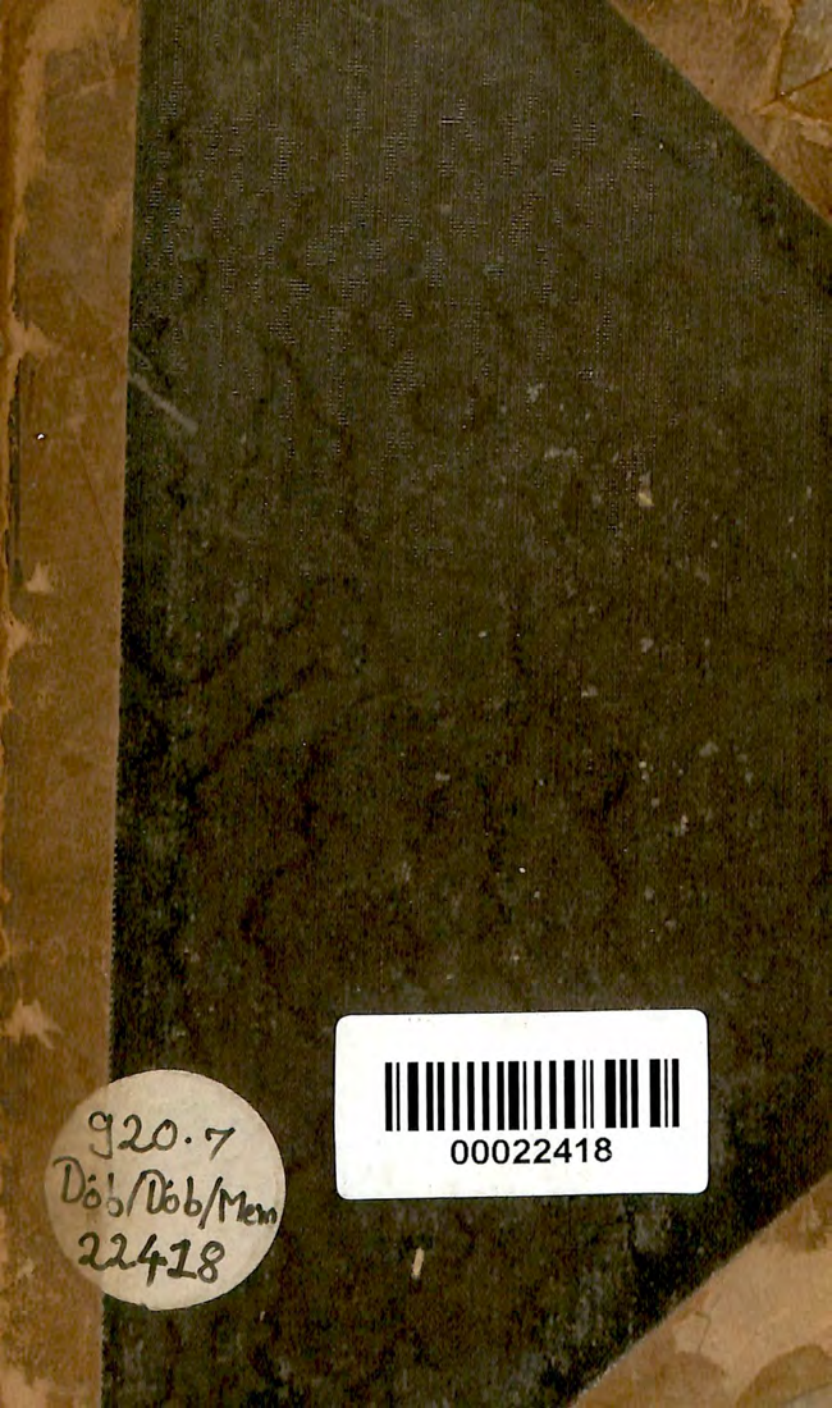
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MEMOIRS

OF

THE BARONESS D'OBERKIRCH,

COUNTESS DE MONTBRISON.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF,

AND

EDITED BY HER GRANDSON,

THE COUNT DE MONTBRISON.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE BARONESS D'OBERKIRCH.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction — My birth—My grandfathers and grandmothers — Malhause — My father — My mother dies young—My uncles—The Bouillon regiment—King Dagobert—The castle of Schweighausen—My education—My godmother—The Waldners—The Berckheim — The Glaubitz — Montbéliard — Arrival of the Prince Eugene.

THE pages which I present to my reader are not memoirs, they are rather recollections. I have never had the slightest pretension to be a *bel esprit*, or to occupy a niche in the temple of Fame. I write that I may pass over in my mind the principal events of my life ; they are deeply interesting to me, nor will they be less so to my daughter. I know not in what light they may appear to others. I speak little of what concerns myself personally ; just as much as is necessary to make me known, and to prove that I have seen what I relate. My

thoughts and my reflections are exclusively my own, I am not accountable to any person for them. My recollections are dear to me because I alone have a right to them. To divulge them would be to diminish the happiness they afford me. These pages, then, are but as a casket in which I place them, whence I may draw them forth in my old age.

I write these pages in 1789, in my thirty-fifth year. I kept, in '82, a journal in which I minutely detailed my travels, with Madame la comtesse du Nord, to Paris, and from thence, through Brittany, Normandy, Picardy, Holland, and the Electoral States.

I observed the same practice in '84 and '86, during two visits I made to Paris, whither I was drawn by the kindness with which H.S.H. Madame la duchesse de Bourbon deigned to honour me. I combine these journals and these notes to form the history of the first thirty-five years of my life. I speak in it of those that I have known; of facts of which I have been the witness; of the remarkable personages of this century with whom I have been intimately or distantly acquainted, or with whom I have had either personal or family connections. I add some of the letters which have been written to me by H.I.H. Madame la grande-duchesse Maria Fœderowna. This august princess, spite of her abode in a foreign

land, still entertains for me the deep and tender affection which sprung up in our infancy, and is good enough to write to me sometimes. My respectful devotedness to this amiable princess is one of the most profound sentiments of my heart. As these memoirs may one day meet the eye of the careless or the cold, I would scruple to interweave in them that part of our correspondence which is solely confidential; I cannot, however, resist the desire of making my daughter and her children, if she ever have any, acquainted with this noble mind, this tender heart, and this pure and lofty imagination, which the highest degree of worldly honours has never for a moment been able to corrupt, and which unconsciously reveal themselves in this correspondence.

The description of some of our ruined castles of Alsace leads me naturally to speak of the nobility of this country, of its local government, and the habits of its people—recitals which will, I fear, a few years hence, become matters of curious inquiry, for the tempest threatens the ancient social edifice, and God only knows how far His anger may pursue this perverse and abandoned generation.

I shall often be obliged to relate things alike repugnant to my feelings and my principles, but which portray the epoch in which we live. I will, however, avoid low gossip, not possessing a

talent for that style of writing which gives such things currency. I record facts either more or less serious, and I will have at least the merit of an exact adherence to truth. I must, however, observe, that the spirit of the times often found vent in certain expressions which, though far from elegant, I shall be obliged to record, believing them to be characteristic of the period. Must not the painter use the tint which will best portray his subject?

Now that I have warned my readers, if I should have any, of what they are to expect in these pages, I hasten to commence my subject, having always detested long prefaces.

I was born on the 5th of June 1754, in the castle of Schweighausen, in Upper Alsace.

I am the daughter of Francis Lewis, baron de Waldner de Freundstein, who became count on the death of his brother, and of Wilhelmina Augusta Elenora Sophia de Berekheim, of the branch of Ribécauville.*

My maternal grandmother was still alive at the time of my birth. My other grand-parents had died before that event. This lady was a Berekheim of the branch of Jebsheim, and had married her cousin Philip-Frederick, baron de Berekheim-

* Ribécauville, or Rapolsweger, a lordship belonging originally to the house of Rapolstein or Ribeaupierre.

Ribécauville. Thus my mother united in her own person the two branches of this house, one of the most illustrious of the province.

My grandfather de Waldner had married a Wurmser of the branch of Yenderheim-Sonderhausen, who died at Malhause in 1743. Her husband had died at the same place in 1735. I was baptized on the 7th of June 1754, in the parish church of Malhause, in the holy evangelical Protestant faith. My godfathers were Louis Anstatt de Waldner and Christian Louis Berekheim, my maternal uncle; my godmothers, the comtesse de Waldner, *née* de Vologer, wife of my uncle Dagobert. This uncle was afterwards lieutenant-general in the royal army, and Eve de Wurmser, cousin-german to my father. I was baptized Henrietta Louisa.

Malhause was an important city allied to Switzerland, and in which the Waldners had enjoyed at all times the honorary right of citizenship. This prerogative gives the right of serving in the Helvetic troops, amongst which the Waldners have a regiment. In order to preserve this privilege, the sons of our family were always baptized at Malhause, and the worthy citizens seemed highly flattered by this piece of politeness. Their territory is surrounded on all sides by France. The aristocratic government is composed of seventy-eight members, and of three burgomasters, each

governing in his turn. The domains of Malhause do not extend far beyond the walls of the city. The inhabitants are of the Protestant religion.

There were, I have been told, great festivities at my baptism. I was treated as an heir. I would to Heaven that I were so! I should not then be obliged to await in fearful expectation those convulsions which already announce themselves, without entertaining a hope of being useful to my country, to my sovereigns, who have overwhelmed me with kindness, to the cause of my caste and of my ancestors. I cannot persuade myself that a change of measures will bring an increase of happiness; on the contrary, I believe that the destruction of the monarchy is inevitable, if our sovereigns enter on this dangerous path. May I be mistaken!

My father, the baron Francis Louis de Waldner, head of the family, served at first as captain, then as major, in the Royal Cavalry. He became afterwards colonel *à la suite* in the regiment Wurtemberg, and at length commanding colonel of the regiment de Bouillon, from the 27th of February 1759, to the 1st of May 1760, when he retired.

He is chevalier of the order of military merit, which is given to Protestant officers instead of the cross of St. Louis, and which differs from the latter only in the colour of the ribbon.

He is also commander of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, and president of the resident nobility in the circle of Suabia, canton of Ortenau.

I never knew my mother, and my earliest recollection is that of the mourning dress which I wore for her when I was three or four years old. That was my age when she died. Poor mother! I have often regretted her. Her counsels would have been so useful to me at my entrance into the great world; and since that I myself have had a daughter, I feel how my mother would have loved me. She was married in 1751, and died at Baldenheim in 1757, in the flower of her youth and splendour of her beauty. She left three children, two sons and myself. The eldest of my brothers died young, as we shall see afterwards, and now in 1789 there remains to me only my youngest brother Godfrey, in whom the hopes of his family are centred.

My father had three brothers, one of whom, lieutenant-colonel in the regiment de Waldner, died at Paris in 1764. I have only a slight recollection of him. Of the two survivors, one, Christian Frederick Dagobert count de Waldner, is lieutenant-general and *propriétaire* of the Swiss regiment de Waldner.

The other, chevalier and afterwards commander of the Teutonic order, has been up to 1767

colonel of the regiment de Bouillon. He replaced my father in this post, and left to become colonel of the royal Swiss-German regiment. My father and I visited him in his garrison in June 1766. How beautiful was that regiment de Bouillon! What admirable discipline! what order! what daring courage! My father was enraptured, and my childish imagination deeply impressed. The soldiers and officers adored their former colonel, and paid me the most profound respect. I thought myself a personage of importance where I was so honoured by these moustached warriors, who always gave me a military salute. How magnificent my uncle seemed to me in his white coat with black facings, adorned with eight silver clasps (I have counted them; it was the act of a little girl), the collar, turned over, was also trimmed with silver lace *à crépines*. I was at that time only twelve years of age, but all these things still present themselves vividly to my mind. That which struck me most, as I have said, was the affection of the older officers for my father. The tenderness of their attachment resembled that of a lover for a mistress. The prince de Bouillon, *propriétaire* of the regiment, could not have been received with more distinction.

I remember nothing of my uncle Dagobert but his comical name. My brothers and I, when

children, could not cease to speak of it, and no sooner was his name mentioned than the unlucky song, *with all its consequences,* presented itself to our minds. My little brother Godfrey used to get into roars of laughter, for which we were both scolded, for I joined in them. A family tradition (I cannot vouch for its truth) was the cause of this odd name being introduced into our house. It is said that King Dagobert, master of the philosophic St. Eloi, became godfather, during his stay at Ruffach, to one of the ancient lords de Waldner. To perpetuate the remembrance of this honour, the name of Dagobert is found frequently inscribed on our genealogical tree. Whatever may be the truth of this tradition, certain it is that had the Almighty bestowed a son on me, I would not have given him this royal Christian name; I would have feared that it might be the cause of his sister's supping on dry bread, a punishment to which I was condemned more than once, in memory of this great king of the first race.

The castle of Schweighausen came into the possession of my ancestors on the extinction of a family that bore our name. It is situated on the route from Colmar to Belfort, a league to the south of Cernay, and a league and a half to the south-east of Thann, near an afflux of the Totter, or Dotter, a little river issuing from the mountains

of Vosges, between Alsace and Lorraine. The Totter passes through Masvaux or Masmunster, and falls into the Ill, a league above Malhause.

Schweighausen is a large square building, flanked on the north by a tower with a belfry. It is surrounded by a deep moat, constantly filled with running water, supplied by a little stream, and separated from a pretty pond by beautifully laid-out gardens. The entrance is guarded by an old-fashioned bridge leading directly to the outer court-yard, which is surrounded by extensive out-offices.

To the west the land rises in a semicircular form, thickly planted with majestic trees. Thence one has a view of the whole chain of the Vosges, interspersed with many a mouldering ruin, and beneath in the valley rise the village spires and many "a fair abbaye." The whole forms a magic picture. Wooded hills ascend as if in regular gradations; the various shades of foliage, blending or contrasting, curtain the mountain side with a magnificent drapery. O Alsace! my beloved country! nothing has ever been able to efface your remembrance from my heart—nothing is comparable to the splendour with which Nature decks herself in your woods and your valleys, your mountains and your streams. I can well conceive what ought to be the enthusiasm of her children for such a country,—a country which offers every charm, and

yields every comfort. I will speak hereafter of the castle of Freunstein, from which we have taken our name, and which was destroyed two centuries ago in the war of the Rustands, or peasants.

I preferred Schweighausen to any spot on earth. The dear days of my childhood were passed there; how happy were my brothers and I in that abode! What good advice we received there! What noble and what excellent examples were proposed to us! My brothers were taught to sacrifice everything to honour and to duty, and I was desired to imitate my mother. We lived there in quiet and retirement, receiving the visits of our relatives and friends, praying to the Lord, and practising his holy religion, listening to the spoken word of God, and treasuring it up in our bosoms. Every evening we assembled round my father, who endeavoured to repay by the extreme tenderness of his affection the loss we had sustained in my mother. We listened to his conversations with my uncles or the pious clergymen who often visited us at the castle. He related historical facts, the high deeds of our ancestors and of the people of Alsace, who have never bent beneath a foreign yoke, and scorned to admit a master. What giants these men were! these noble knights, living in their eagle nests, and descending their mountains to redress, or, alas! too often to oppress innocence. I adored these

legendary tales; I could listen to them for ever; and, true to these memories, I will insert a few of them in the pages I propose to write.

After the death of my mother, my father was very much embarrassed about my education. The idea of placing me in a Catholic convent could not for a moment enter his mind. We held these houses in detestation. I was then much more intolerant than I now am. An intercourse with the world has mollified my bigotry, and I have been obliged to tolerate what I could not proscribe. At that time my *exaggerated fervour*—I borrow a phrase from the Roman Catholic devotees, not being able to find one more expressive—would not allow me to make any concession. I followed strictly the spirit and the letter of the law. My father favoured these ideas, and therefore begged my godmother, Madame Eve de Wurmser, to fulfil in my regard the duties of a mother. She consented.

I still remember her inauguration in the castle, the apartments that were allotted her, and the pretty little chamber that was appointed me close to hers. The chamber and little drawing-room which during my mother's life were used by her, remained shut up; my father did not wish that my godmother should take possession of them. These wounds of his heart still bled freshly. Madame de Wurmser superintended my education,

which was based upon the strictest principles. She was a woman of elevated mind and strong understanding. She taught me a knowledge of the world, and made me feel that it was useless to ask her anything, that she ought not to grant; she taught me to govern my own mind, to repulse exaggerated fancies, the day-dreams of the imagination. She had in early life known bitter sorrows, which had rendered her pensive, nay almost sad. In her society my gaiety was soon damped, and I became in a little while edifyingly reserved and grave. My gratitude to my godmother shall end only with my life. It is to her instructions I am indebted for anything that may render me valuable or useful in society. We often remained alone at Schweighausen when my father quitted it either for business or for pleasure. Madame de Wurmser's conversation made these days pass like minutes. I had from nature a decided taste for the study of history. I wished to know everything, to learn everything, to remember everything. My extraordinary memory, especially for dates, assisted me, and smoothed away the difficulties. I could recite entire pages without a single mistake; I abandoned myself with passionate ardour to the study of chronology, and had even the audacity to plunge into theological discussions. Madame de Wurmser soon forbid them; and she was right, for

I had become a disputant. I introduced controversial subjects, and a disagreeable bitterness was too often mixed in my observations. I plunged to an immeasurable depth into abstruse inquiries and knotty arguments, often forgetting in the mazy route the point from which I had started; and would have become inevitably either a fanatic or a fool. My wise and watchful guide preached toleration incessantly; she succeeded in inculcating the principle, and I am become most indulgent towards the religious belief of others, provided they do not attack mine.

One of my favourite studies, as may be easily conceived, was that of the chronicles of our house; and I really believe this to be a salutary study. When one is fully convinced of the greatness of one's ancestors, one would blush to degenerate from them; one feels a noble emulation to imitate them, and to run the same glorious career. Never was adage more true than that: *noblesse oblige* (nobility ennobles).

Genealogists carry back our family to the time of Louis le Débonnaire, and to one of his generals named, as they say, Waldner, who signalized himself in 814 in the war against Kartwin, mayor of the palace, a revolutionist of that time accused of peculation and other *courtesies* of that kind. The genealogical charts of the third century which I

have consulted mention the Waldners as noblemen of high antiquity even then. They sustained during seven years a war against the city of Zurich, which had seized their suzerain, John of Hapsburg, and kept him prisoner. In retaliation they shut up in their castle all the *Zurichians* that they had captured, and detained them until the deliverance of John of Hapsburg, who thus owed them both his liberty and his life. Some time after they took up arms against Strasburg, against Soultz Rouffach, &c. In a word, they have played a very important part in the history of Alsace. They possessed many fiefs there, the ruins of which may be yet seen amongst our mountains.

From the very foundation of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, knights of the house of De Waldner were to be found in its ranks, and one of them, Christopher de Waldner, was killed at Rhodes, in 1523, after performing prodigies of valour in defending this city against Solyman. A short time previous John de Waldner had been chancellor of the empire at the Diet of Worms, in 1497.

My mother, as I have said, was a Berekheim of the branch of Ribécauville. She had two brothers, of whom the younger, a commanding officer in the Royal Deux-Ponts regiment, and married to a Rathsamhausen d'Ehenweger, was my godfather; he was to me indeed a second father. The other,

six years older, and who was called Berekheim de Loerrach, was counsellor of the regency at Baden. He married a Glaubitz, a name of which the origin is rather curious.

The Glaubitz, ancient barons of Silesia, emigrated to Poland, from whence one of the family transplanted himself to the banks of the Rhine. This family is descended from an ancient knight, a member of the second Crusade. He fought, in sight of the two armies, a Saracen renowned for strength and courage, and conquered him amidst the applauding shouts of Christian and infidel. Plunging his sword into the bosom of his conquered enemy, he exclaimed: "Glaub jtz," or "jetz"—Believe now.

Maria Octavia Louisa de Glaubitz, sister of my aunt, married a Berekheim of the elder branch, which united still more closely the house of Berekheim, a family in which goodness is a patrimonial inheritance. They are adored by their vassals, and their estates, particularly that of Schoppenwyr, between Colmar and Schelstadt, where they usually reside, are, as the tenants and peasantry say, like the earthly paradise.

I may perhaps have lingered a little too long over these accounts of my family, but I do not regret it. In the first place I wished it to be distinctly known from what race I have sprung; I feel it to be a conscientious obligation, and besides

I find a pleasure in relating these particulars. I have the weakness, if it be one, to esteem what the heroes of the present day call trifles, and I ask, in my future son-in-law, if Providence should send me one in the midst of the chaos which surrounds us, and which seems about to swallow up all social order; I ask, I say, in my son-in-law, only high birth; there is a remedy for every defect but the want of that.

Apologising for this digression, to which I would put an end were I not obliged, before entering further into the history of my life, to relate the origin of my intimacy with the illustrious family of Montbéliard and Wurtemberg: living in the same neighbourhood was the primary cause. We were only nine leagues distant from their serene highnesses, and as the de Waldners have always attended their court, my father conducted me thither. I was overwhelmed with kindness in my first visit; the Princess Dorothea, now grand-duchess of Russia, honoured me with her affection, and her illustrious mother, H.R.H. Madame la duchesse de Wurtemberg, princess de Montbéliard, testified for me an almost maternal kindness and affection.

Montbéliard is the capital of a comté formerly attached to the German empire, but not belonging to any particular circle. Situated between the

principality of Porentrug, which belongs to the bishopric of Bâsle, Soudyan, Lorraine, and Franche Comté, it still preserves its independence. The state is composed of the comté of Montbéliard, properly so called, and of seven or nine lordships. The male line of the first reigning house expired 1394. The heiress married Eberhardt, count of Wurtemberg, and gave him as a marriage portion the comté de Montbéliard; the Wurtemberg family received the title of duke a hundred years after. Montbéliard was long the appanage of the younger branches, which became gradually extinct, and the comté returned to Wurtemberg-Stuttgard, the elder and reigning branch, who were also dukes of Wurtemberg-Montbéliard, and, by abbreviation, dukes de Montbéliard. I do not know how the custom of writing Wurtemberg has been introduced—it is not the ancient orthography.

In the beginning of this century, in 1723, the Prince Leopold Eberhardt not having left heirs capable of succeeding, the reigning duke of Wurtemberg-Stuttgard, Eberhardt Louis, received the investiture of the comté from the Emperor Leopold. This prince fixed his abode there, but neither his cousin, Charles Alexander, who succeeded him in 1733, nor any prince of the family, has followed an example so advantageous to the principality.

But in 1769 the Duke Frederick Eugene de Wurtemberg, third son of the Duke Charles Alexander, and father of the reigning Duke Charles Eugene, took up his abode at Montbéliard with his family. He had married nineteen years previously, being then only general officer in the Prussian service. He had several children in his marriage with the Princess Frederica Dorothea Sophia, daughter of the Margrave de Brandenburg-Schwadt, niece to the great Frederick.

The residence of this family was a blessing from Heaven for this hitherto-abandoned little country. The inexhaustible benevolence of these princes, their solicitude for their subjects, who had been long accustomed to misery, soon spread abundance and richness around them. This comté, which had during seven centuries and a half preserved its independence, soon took the position that its importance merited. The princes assumed the title of serene highness, by permission of the Emperor Leopold the First; they had previously been named simply *your Grace*. The inhabitants, who were all Protestants, adored the august family to whom they owed all their happiness. It was under these auspices, and in these circumstances, that I was presented for the first time at their court.

CHAPTER II.

The Baron Waldner at Paris—Presentation at Versailles—The prince of Montbéliard and his family—Description of his mother, princess of La Tour and Taxis—First visit—The castle of Montbéliard—Princess Dorothea of Wurtemburg — Mdlle. Schneider, my waiting-maid—Madame Hendel, femme-de-charge at Montbéliard—Baron Maucler—Birth of a prince—Erection of the château of Etupes—Visit of the reigning duke—Some account of this prince—Negotiation for his marriage—Extravagances; the States remonstrate—The duke is affianced—Countess Hohenheim—Prince Louis Eugene—Three brothers called Eugene, and why.

My father visited Paris, he was very well received at Court. He had the honour of being presented to His Majesty Louis XV., on the 23rd of September 1769, when, after having presented his credentials, he took his place in one of the carriages which accompanied the king to the chase; he was also once invited to Croisy, which may be considered a very high distinction, the king receiving there only those whom he honoured with his intimacy. My father was unfitted both by disposition and moral principles to please a prince who unfortunately for France was entirely devoted to his mistresses. Perhaps his deportment was too grave,

or his serious conversation thought a check upon those joyous meetings; however it was he was not invited again. He was promised that his brother the major should be made brigadier, a promise which was soon fulfilled, as my uncle was one of those promoted on the 3rd of January 1770. This uncle had been presented at Versailles the 12th of March 1755, fourteen years before. The early death of my mother prevented her enjoying a like honour, and my grandmother sought happiness only in seclusion. Later, as we shall see, I enjoyed this prerogative myself, for which I was prepared by serving my court apprenticeship at Montbéliard, under princes not difficult to please, for nowhere, not even in the humblest cottage, did the domestic virtues ever shine with greater purity and lustre than in this royal abode.

My father returned from Paris about the same time that Prince Frederick Eugene fixed his residence at Montbéliard, and hastened, accompanied by Madame Wurmser, to pay his respects to his royal highness. The prince and his august spouse received him in the kindest and most honourable manner. The Baron Waldner, my grandfather, had rendered important services to the Duke Leopold Eberhardt during the disputes of the latter with the empire concerning the succession of the principality The life of this Duke Leopold Eberhardt (as I shall

relate in another place) was filled with the most romantic adventures, in which love played only too important a part. In 1720 and 1723 he had requested M. de Waldner to support his interests with the emperor and the regent of France; but his cause, being either bad or difficult to sustain, failed, notwithstanding the zeal of my grandfather. My father's reception at the court of Frederick Eugene was as gracious as if this negotiation had succeeded. The comté of Montbéliard was restored to the reigning branch of Wurtemberg-Stuttgard. The pages of these memoirs which will relate to Duke Leopold Eberhardt will not be the least interesting amongst them. I will recount various anecdotes of this extraordinary man, for the authenticity of which I can vouch, as Baron Waldner learned them at their source. He was a kind of Sardanapalus or Louis XIV., on a lesser scale; he has left an immortal reputation in this country, where such wild adventures as his were unknown, and where, if it please God, they will never be again enacted.

My father had been colonel of the Wurtembergian regiment belonging to the Duke Louis Eugene, brother of the Prince Frederick Eugene, which regiment having been incorporated with the Royal German caused my father to join that of Bouillon. The prince spoke with him for a long

time concerning this affair, and treated him with the greatest distinction. Her royal highness the duchess was not less gracious to him and to Madame Wurmser.

"I know that you have a charming daughter, M. de Waldner," said she; "you must bring her to us very soon, I would wish my children to be acquainted with her; they could not have a better friend, and, for several reasons, I would wish them to make a great many; in a few days I will expect you and the Countess Henrietta." (I was called countess because I belonged to a Protestant Chapter of Germany, of which the Canonesses bore this title.)

Such an invitation could not be declined; my father came home delighted: he told me of my good fortune, which in truth it was for me. I was very happy at Schweighausen, but at fifteen one feels new desires; I hoped to see the world and to meet companions of my own age, with whom I could often talk and sometimes laugh. I was tall; they said I had a distinguished air; my face was good-looking, notwithstanding my health, which had been always delicate; and, besides, the most sensible girl has a thousand ideas, a thousand vague desires, which bear her imagination beyond the walls of a castle. A young bird spreads its wings and seeks to fly—a young girl desires to see, to

know. I will say nothing of the pleasure I felt in a change of dress: my pinafores were put aside, I got long dresses; and, perhaps because of my going to the court at Montbéliard, I was allowed to wear a hoop and court dress—think of my delight.

The family into which I was to have the honour of being admitted consisted, in the first place, of the Duke Frederick Eugene de Wurtemberg, prince of Montbéliard, aged 37 years. He inherited some of the genius of his mother, the princess of La Tour and Taxis, whose powers of fascination were so generally recognised during her lifetime. The lively disposition of this princess, vivacious almost to petulance, and her strong passions, were a constant subject of conversation in the German courts. She was suspected of many weaknesses, whether justly or unjustly I cannot say; all that I know is that she possessed the art of pleasing in an eminent degree, and was the most charming and the most captivating of women. Of this she could not be ignorant, as she heard it constantly; but what influence it may have had on her is a secret between herself and God.

The Prince Eugene had at first been destined by his father for the church, and had even received at eighteen the ecclesiastical tonsure at Constance. But he soon abandoned this career to enter the service of Frederick II. of Prussia, and served under

his orders during the seven-years' war. He covered himself with glory: the hero took notice of him. The duchess, his mother, who did not allow any opportunity to escape, profited of this occasion to negotiate at Berlin a marriage between this prince (who was her third son) and the princess Frederica Dorothea Sophia, daughter of the Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwadt, and niece of the king. As it ought to be, they fell in love on their first acquaintance: never was there a happier or more suitable union. The princess of Montbéliard was an accomplished woman, in whom virtue ennobled every grace.

When I had the honour of being presented to them, the princess was thirty-three years of age. They had five sons and three daughters. The eldest, Prince Frederick William, born in Pomerania, where his father's regiment was in garrison, was of the same age as I, that was fifteen.

His brother, Prince Louis, was thirteen. Prince Eugene the Third was eleven. The fourth was Prince William who was eight, and the fifth Prince Ferdinand who was only six.

Of the three daughters, the eldest was my dear Princess Dorothea who, though only ten, was almost as tall as I. She then gave promise of all for which she has been since distinguished—a charming disposition, an excellent heart, and the most extraordinary beauty. Although she was

short-sighted, her eyes were magnificent, and their brilliancy seemed but the reflection of her soul.

The Princess Frederica, her sister, was four; she has been since married to the coadjutor of Lubeck, and died in 1789, at twenty years of age, as we shall see hereafter.

The last of all was the Princess Elizabeth, who was but two; she became grand-duchess of Tuscany in 1788.

All these princes were reared in the Lutheran religion, in accordance with the wishes of the king of Prussia, although the prince of Montbéliard was a Catholic, and had quitted the Prussian service to become general of cavalry in the Suabian circle.

On the day fixed for my first visit, I rose with the dawn. My impatience to set out was so great that I could not remain quietly in any one place after I had put on a dress of pink *gros de Tour*, brocaded with flowers in their natural colours, and trimmed with silvered ribbon. It was worn together with a petticoat of plain white Indian silk over a small hoop. In my hair I wore a rose and a small aigrette of pearls, which had belonged successively to my grandmother and to my mother. I have always attached a superstition to this jewel, believing it to be a kind of talisman which would confer happiness on the wearer; and, therefore, never failed to wear it on all important

occasions, counting amongst them my wedding day. On the way from Schweighausen to Montbéliard, I held myself as stiff as a soldier, lest I should derange my dress; I was counselled not to forget my courtesies, not to speak except when spoken to, to be respectful to the young princesses, and reserved with the young princes. Until the very moment of our arrival I heard nothing but constant repetitions of etiquette and formalities, to which our royal hosts attached but little importance, but which it was our duty not to forget. At last we saw Montbéliard! I will say a few words descriptive of the castle before relating my entrance into it, as I always wish to arrange my frame before placing my picture.

The castle of Montbéliard dates no earlier than 1751; it has replaced a large and strongly-built mansion-house somewhat resembling a citadel, situated on the side of a steep rock, from which it overlooked the city, and was rendered almost impregnable by its position. It was partly dismantled in 1677, by the order of Louis XIV. It was composed of two parts, separated by the church of St. Mainbœuf, which was situated in the same enclosure. The more ancient part was called the "*Mid-chatel,*" or the *Chatel derrière;* the other, the *Chatel-neuf,* or *Chatel-devant,* on account of its position with respect to the church.

It is a tradition that it was formerly surrounded by cedars brought from the Holy Land by a count of Montbéliard in 1400.

The baron of Gerninginen, governor of the principality, had the present edifice erected about the middle of the seventeenth century. The court-yard is delightfully shaded by linden and chestnut trees. The lofty and spacious apartments are, or rather were at that time, very simply furnished. The gay and gallant times of the Duke Eberhardt had passed away. The suite of their Royal Highnesses were sufficiently well lodged, comfortably, though without luxury. They sought to make all around them happy, and were universally and deservedly beloved. My heart beat quick as our carriage entered the court-yard; and as we ascended a flight of steps where the chamberlain of the princess received us, my father whispered some words of encouragement:—"You will do very well, my daughter, do not be afraid."

We entered, and saluted the duke and duchess. I was so timid that I could not see anything, but the voice of the duchess reassured me as it were by enchantment. She spoke to me in the most flattering and gracious manner; and after permitting me to kiss her hand, she called the Princess Dorothea, and presented me to her herself without the formality of an intermediate person.

"My daughter," said she to her, "this is a young lady that I would wish to be your friend. Be as good and as attentive to study as she, and endeavour to impress upon her the pleasure we all feel in receiving her, that she may often be induced to come again."

The young princess replied by unceremoniously throwing her arms round my neck, which embarrassed my father very much, and made their highnesses laugh aloud.

"This is not Versailles, baron," said the prince, "and I have not the least objection that your daughter should embrace mine."

From this day I was as much at home with this royal family as if I had lived with them all my life. She who was to ascend the throne of the Czars, she who was to be mistress of half Europe, treated me as a sister, as an equal. She lavished on me the tenderest affection and the most unbounded confidence, and allowed me to enjoy all the sweet familiarities of a mutual affection. When we were preparing to take leave, the prince told my father that apartments had been prepared for us, and that we and Madame Wurmser should pass some days at the castle. I can assure you that I required no entreaties to remain. I had brought my waiting-maid, Mdlle. Schneider, with me. I have never parted with her. She has rocked my

cradle, tended my youth, and been a second self in my house since I possessed one of my own. She was at that time thirty-nine years of age. An extraordinary intimacy sprung up between her and Madame Hendel, femme-de-charge of the castle. What a strange person that Madame Hendel was! What joyous peals of laughter she often caused to the young princesses and to me. We always called her Madame Pompadour, not that there existed any similarity between her and the lady of that name (or that we could have understood such an allusion if there did), but because of her pompous and majestic bearing. She usually wore a dress of stiff violet silk, with red knots, the rustling of which was heard through all the corridors from the moment she left her room. She thought herself the greatest lady in Europe after the princess; and when speaking of herself always said, *they* have done so and so, *they* have been in such a place; *I* appearing to her too vulgar and commonplace for her rank. She was not aware that in this she imitated M. de Turenne, nor do I think she would feel flattered had she known it, a viscount being in her eyes a very humble person, were he even a Latour or a Bouillon. When the Princess Dorothea was married to the czarovitz, we thought she would have burst with pride. She was always raving of the power, of the *vast* dominions of her

dear mistress. To be able to appreciate the word vast, one should have heard her pronounce it as she opened her mouth to its fullest vertical extent.

The governor of the young princes was the baron de Maucler, a distinguished military officer of high birth, and who possessed a brilliant understanding. All the family idolized him, and looked upon him as a beloved friend. I was soon on the very best terms with this amiable *pedagogue*, as the prince de Montbéliard used laughingly to call him. His wife, the baroness Lefort, to whom he has been since married, was born in Geneva, and was descended from the companion of the Czar Peter the Great. The Princess Dorothea looked on that as a mark of predestination when her marriage with the czarovitz was first spoken of. The truth is, she was constantly questioning M. de Maucler about Peter I. and Russia ; and in our confidential conversations she always spoke of this country with a burning curiosity that was almost prophetic. Perhaps she foresaw her future destiny.

Some years after, when the prince of Montbéliard sent his three eldest sons to Lausanne for the completion of their education, M. de Maucler accompanied them. He watched over them with paternal solicitude, which they repaid with filial affection. We will often again have occasion to speak of him. From the year 1769 I became an

almost habitual inmate of the castle of Montbéliard. I always lived there when my father was from home, and even sometimes remained there with him. The princess was enceinte, and rather delicate. She rarely went out, and I read to her in French or German: she always corrected me when I made a mistake in pronunciation, or when I uttered some ill-constructed phrase. During the months immediately preceding the birth of the young prince, she asked my father to allow me to remain with her to amuse her, as she said: she called me her reader, and taught me a wonderful tapestry stitch (le point de Troye), in which she embroidered fauteuils with inimitable skill.

The 3rd of May 1770 was a great festival at Montbéliard, H.R.H. having given birth to a prince, who was called Charles Henry Frederic. This was her sixth son. The entire city was illuminated, and the different guilds of citizens came one after the other to congratulate their sovereigns. I ate so great a quantity of sweetmeats that I was sick for two days, which greatly amused the Princess Dorothea, who, though she had eaten more than I; and continued eating them a week after, escaped unhurt. Madame Hendel had six dozen boxes of them for her share, which she allowed to decay rather than waste one on the servants of the castle.

In the course of the same year the prince executed a favourite project, that of building a summer residence at Etupes, a pretty village two leagues from Montbéliard, on the road to Basle. It was finished at the end of November. Beloved castle of Etupes, what tender memories twine around you! how deserted do you now appear to me without my dear princess! How delightful you were then, when your splendour was softened by refinement! how delicious were your gardens!

The 20th of December 1770, Charles Eugene, the reigning duke of Wurtemberg, came to Etupes, with his brother: my father and I had the honour of accompanying them. The Prince Charles Eugene had a fine classical head. At the birth of this prince, in 1728, it was little thought that he would ascend the throne of Wurtemberg, and yet, in 1737, every obstacle being removed, he became, at nine years of age, head of the ducal house. Placed under the guardianship of his mother and of the dukes of Wurtemberg-Neustadt, and of Wurtemberg-Oels, his nearest relations, the duke minor was conducted to the court of the great Frederick. The intelligence and capacity which he soon showed caused his minority to be abridged. At sixteen the Emperor Charles VII. invested him with the government of the duchies of Wurtemberg and of Montbéliard. He assembled around him a

brilliant court, whither the presence of his mother attracted all that could charm or delight. The treasures of the State soon became the prey of male and female favourites. Balls, concerts, shows, brilliant hunts, employed all the time of this young prince, whose early youth had given promise of so much glory. Intoxicated by youth and power, surrounded by seductions of every kind, he flirted with every woman, adored several, and loved one, who afterwards became his Egeria, and was the means of recalling him to nobler pursuits. This court of Stuttgard became the principal one of Germany; its luxury was alarming, and the duke lavished his millions without restraint. The consequence was that the different states of the duchy remonstrated with the duke, which had the effect of checking these excesses for a time, but could not entirely repress them. The prince was offended by this interference, which he considered disrespectful, and determined to continue his former career. It was then that the lady of whom I have spoken showed him his danger—his errors. She represented to him what he was, what he might have been; she painted what would be the terrible consequence of his extravagance; she threatened to abandon him if he neglected her warning, and at length led him to acknowledge his errors, and to resolve to repair them. At the time

that I saw him at Etupes and Montbéliard he was forty-two years of age, and still one of the finest men in Europe. Experience had matured his understanding; he had become reconciled with the states, and had no higher ambition than to regain the affection of his subjects, to encourage agriculture, and to assist the development of other sources of national wealth. He was married to a princess of Brandenburg-Bareith, daughter of Frederica Sophia of Prussia, eldest sister of the great Frederick. He had no children, and would, in consequence, be succeeded by his next brother, Prince Louis Eugene. Charles Eugene's marriage had been negotiated by his mother, the charming princess of La Tour and Taxis, of whom I have already spoken. She had arranged it immediately after the arrival of her son at Berlin, and it was decided that the affianced princes should themselves retain the power of annulling or fulfilling the contract. They were satisfied with the arrangements that had been made for them, though feeling for each other no warmer sentiment than that of friendship. The affections of the duke belonged to another. If any excuse could be found for this conduct, it would be in the extraordinary merit of the lady. Her beauty was her least charm, and she loved the duke with an unparalleled disinterestedness and devotion. We will again have occasion to speak of this countess.

Hohenheim (this was her name), when we will find her connection with the prince legitimatized by marriage.

The Prince Louis Eugene, his brother's heir apparent, is lieutenant-general in the French service, and has distinguished himself at the head of the troops of Louis XV. against Maria Theresa. He generally resides at Paris.*

The three brothers, as we have seen, bear the name of Eugene, in accordance with the wishes of their father, who had a great admiration for the celebrated Prince Eugene of Savoy; however, the youngest brother only was called Eugene.† They were Catholics, their father having embraced that religion, but did not in consequence make any alteration in the constitution of the duchy, which had been, and still remains, Protestant. I feel great admiration for this forbearance: liberty of

* He is an amiable prince, but unfortunately perpetrates puns and "jeu de mots," which are, as M. de Voltaire says, "L'esprit de ceux qui n'en ont pas." He writes verses tolerably, and reads them extremely well.

† The Duke Frederick Eugene has also reigned under the name of Frederick I., from 1797 to 1799, but the comté of Montbéliard was reunited to France in 1792 as part of the department of Doubs. The Duke Frederick Eugene is father of the first king of Wurtemberg, and head of the reigning branch. He reigned from 1793 to 1798, and left two daughters, both married to princes of Wallenstein, and a natural son, the count of Sondheim.

conscience cannot be attacked with impunity. Louis XIV. himself has dimmed the lustre of his glory by repealing the edict of Nantes. Of all women of infamous celebrity, I feel the greatest antipathy to Madame Maintenon, notwithstanding the marriage which cast a veil over her errors. She has called down on the old *Lion* the maledictions of an entire people; she has distracted France with intestine wars, and has caused its wealth and industry to seek refuge amongst foreigners.

Honour, on the contrary, to the good and virtuous monarch, who, by the edict of '87, granted to Protestants equal rights with other citizens, and acknowledged the validity of those acts by which they became husbands and heads of families. May their gratitude to the king make them loyal, devoted, and faithful subjects!

CHAPTER III.

The dauphiness at Strasburg—Etiquette observed towards foreign princes—Entrée of Marie Antoinette—Rejoicings and presentations—Description of the dauphiness—Pavilion in the Isle du Rhin—Disagreeable prognostic—Happy saying of the dauphiness—Rejoicings at Montbéliard—The baron and baroness Boreck—Countess Wartensleben—*Blind-man's Buff*—Audience of the prince; grievances—Princess Dorothea of Wurtemberg—Her affection for me—Her mother's confidence in me—Soubriquets—Milord Carcasso—Origin of 'Lane'—Birth of a prince—Gardens at Etupes—M. Tronchin—Antiquities of Mondau—The hermit—The page—Surprise—Government of Montbéliard—Theatrical representations at Etupes—M. de Beroldingen—The prince of Murbach—Viscount Bombelles—Marriage of a Catholic and Protestant null—Duchess Mazarin—Discussions—M. de Wittgenstein—Baron Reinbach—General Strahlenheim—Baron Obenheim—General Wangen—Order of military merit—Jews—Ollwillon—Count Waldner, first grand cross—Birth of Prince Frederic—Bull of Clement XIV.—Death of Louis XV.—*Poufs au sentiment*—Margrave of Bareith and Mdlle. Clairon—Accidental death of duke de Deux-Ponts—Duel of Baron Pirch.

BEFORE speaking further of this visit of the reigning duke of Wurtemburg to Montbéliard, I must relate a very interesting event which took place in the same year, and which I had forgotten to mention in its proper place. The dauphiness,

now queen of France, passed through Strasburg, where I went with my father to pay her our respects. Oh! if I lived a hundred years I could not forget that day, its festivities, those exclamations of joy uttered by a people delighted by the presence of their sovereign. Madame Wurmser accompanied us. The delicate health of the princess of Montbéliard prevented their highnesses undertaking the journey, and besides the etiquette of the French court is so severe and unbending towards foreign princes, that these naturally stay away except when absolutely obliged to appear. Their rank is not recognised, they can only see the king and queen in their cabinets, and even when their majesties invite them to dine, they cannot have the honour of touching their hands; wherefore all those who have visited Versailles have assumed a fictitious name, not wishing, with their proper titles, to be mingled indiscriminately with the crowd of courtiers, as would certainly be the case. Besides, in appearing incognito, they retain their right to private receptions, where their rank is not disputed. There was no exception made even in favour of the relations of the queen (of course I do not include the emperor; he is entirely out of the question): however that may be, the court of Montbéliard, wishing to avoid these inconveniences, sent their apologies.

The *entrée* of the princess was magnificent. Three troops of children from twelve to fifteen years of age, were dressed *à la Suisse*, and stationed along the path of her royal highness, whilst eighteen shepherds and as many shepherdesses of the same age, presented her with baskets of flowers. Nothing could be more picturesque. Twenty-four girls (from fifteen to twenty), daughters of the most respectable citizens, magnificently dressed according to the different German fashions, strewed flowers before the princess, who received them as graciously as Flora herself. The troops of little Swiss got permission to mount guard at the bishop's court during the stay of the dauphiness. The programme of these rejoicings was exactly copied from those of the journey of Louis XV., before his illness, at Metz, the devices being of course altered to suit the occasion. Some persons who were present at the fireworks gave me so lively a description of them, that I feel as if I had seen them myself. What could equal those mythological figures? those horses, chariots? those sea-gods, arms, and flaming shields, placed in the centre of the river Ille, whose flowing waters reflected, as from a thousand mirrors, the brilliant emblems placed upon its surface? It was like the end of the world; all idea of time or place was lost. Nor were more substantial enjoyments forgotten; oxen

were roasted whole, wine flowed in abundance, and so great was the quantity of bread, that the poorest persons would allow it to remain untouched upon the ground.

In the evening the entire city was illuminated, the cathedral was one blaze of light from cross to foundation; every ornament of the building shone like a collection of stars. The different trades displayed their strength and address in various games, for which the dauphiness distributed the prizes, accompanying each with some of those flattering words, whose talismanic influence she has often exercised on the throne of France.

I had the honour of being presented with several other young ladies of quality. She received us with the most captivating simplicity and grace, asked our names, spoke graciously to each, and, before our departure, had distributed amongst us the superb bouquets which had been sent her by the Chambers de Treize and Quinze, of Suat, and the other authorities of the city. I preserved the most beautiful flower of mine in an herbarium as a souvenir, and gave it afterwards to the Princess Dorothea.

The dauphiness was at this time tall and well made, though rather thin. She has changed very little since; her face is still the same, long and regular, with its aquiline nose, high forehead, and

lively blue eyes. Her mouth, which was very small, had even then a slight expression of disdain. She possessed the Austrian lip in a higher degree than any member of her illustrious house. It would be impossible to describe the brilliancy of her complexion; it was literally the mingling of the lily and the rose, and her hair was a light chestnut, in which she wore very little powder. The dignity of her bearing, the majesty of her figure, and the elegance and grace of every movement, were as remarkable then as now. In short, everything in her bespoke a high descent, a noble and generous heart, qualities which gained the affections of all around her.

A pavilion in three divisions had been erected on the Isle du Rhin to receive the archduchess. I know not who it was that had the bad taste to ornament it with tapestries representing the massacres and domestic quarrels of Jason and Medea. The princess and her attendants immediately observed it. "Ah," said the young dauphiness to her German waiting-maid, "what an omen!"

Her attendants were sent back, as is the custom; she wept a great deal at parting from them, and gave them an infinity of messages for the empress, for the archduchess, her sisters, and for her friends at Vienna. She was then attired in the French fashion, in magnificent dresses sent from Paris.

She looked a thousand times more charming in her change of costume. Apartments were prepared for her in the Episcopal palace, where the old cardinal de Rohan had the honour of receiving her. When she alighted the good citizens thought it their duty to address her in a long speech in German, but she interrupted them with astonishing presence of mind, saying—

"Don't speak German, gentlemen; from this day I know no language but French."

The expression with which she spoke these words made them still more touching; everybody was impressed then. Alas! their influence is now no longer felt.

The dauphiness is daughter of Francis Stephen, duke of Lorraine and Bar, who died in 1765, and of the celebrated Maria Teresa, archduchess of Austria, queen of Hungary and Bohemia, on the throne since the 29th October 1780.

M. Durfort asked her in marriage for the dauphin the 16th of April 1770. The 17th she solemnly renounced all her hereditary claims, paternal as well as maternal. On the 19th the marriage ceremony was performed in the Augustinian convent, the archduke Ferdinand representing the dauphin (who became king four years after in 1774). Marie Antoinette left Vienna on the 21st, at a quarter to nine in the morning, and arrived at Strasburg on

the 7th of May. His eminence cardinal Rohan, prince bishop of Strasburg, received her in his palace of Saverne; a palace afterwards the residence of Prince Louis, the unworthy nephew and successor of this venerable prelate, for whom his follies, together with the unfortunate affair of the necklace, have gained so undesirable a celebrity.

The 14th of May the king met the archduchess in the forest of Compiègne, and on the 15th she was married in the chapel of the castle. I will often have occasion to speak of this noble princess, whom I had frequently the honour of approaching, and whose goodness I can never forget.

After my journey to Strasburg we returned to Montbéliard, where we passed all the summer, with the exception of a few excursions to Schweighausen, which I contrived to shorten as much as possible. In November I went again to the city, but returned to Montbéliard in December to be present at the celebration of the birthday of the princess. On the evening of this happy day, Charles the reigning duke of Wurtemberg arrived; he was not expected. We had played a thousand games with the permission of their royal highnesses. We were about commencing "*Blind-man's Buff*," in which the entire court was to take part, with the exception of the baron and baroness of Boreck, the two most singular persons that I met during my youth. They were a

living representation of Philemon and Baucis, loving each other extremely; they never hesitated to express their affection as freely before the princes as if they were alone, calling each other "my love" and "my heart," and even as Prince Frederick told me (I never heard this), "my duck" and "my pet." On this evening they played backgammon with the baron de Wurmser, grand huntsman, and baron Schwager, bishop *in partibus*, high almoner to the Duke Frederick Eugene. These primitive people were often opposed as partners in the game, and then always made signs to each other without the slightest idea of doing anything dishonest. We annoyed them very much by our laughter, and by grotesque shadows which we contrived to cast upon the wall. In the midst of all this confusion, an officer all bewildered bursts suddenly into the room and announces his royal highness. You may easily believe that the masqueraders quickly laid aside their humps, horns, masks, &c. The duke delighted in surprises, and always came unexpectedly. The countess of Wartensleben, who was sitting next to me, was employing all her ingenuity to free me from the disguise in which I was to have represented the devil, but the strings seemed determined not to untie; the Princess Dorothea laughed excessively at my embarrassment; I was very angry. At last we had the good fortune to accomplish our

task before the duke observed us. The countess of Wartensleben, *née* de Linas, was a very charming woman, beautiful, witty, and refined; the princess loved her very much, and frequently invited her to Montbéliard.

The arrival of the reigning duke was an excuse for fêtes as splendid as the limited resources of this retired country would allow. Standards, bearing the arms of Wurtemberg, quartered with those of Montbéliard, floated from every eminence. The Montbéliard quarterings are, a field azure, two fishes or embowed. These fishes must not be confounded with dolphins.

Every lamp, torch, and candle in the town was lighted. The Baron de Boreck, who had some pretensions as a punster, said that these were indeed enlightened rejoicings; at which witticism, his chaste better half, laughed immoderately. All who could display a silken dress or coat of barbacan came in procession to pay their respects to his royal highness. The three divisions of the magistracy presented with great ceremony a list of grievances, which the duke received graciously, and promised to consider.

In the evening he said to the prince of Montbéliard, "I am very much changed, and I am very glad of it; long ago I would have laughed at these good people who seem more ridiculous to me than

your children did the other day at '*Blind-man's Buff*,' but to-day I was as grave as the honest folk themselves. Besides, they are in the right, and I must attend to their demands."

The public audience lasted from nine in the morning until seven in the evening. His highness heard all with patience, and none were refused but those who asked for something absurd. I remember one poor peasant woman, who requested that the bells would not be allowed to toll, as it caused her cream to turn sour.

On the day of his departure, the reigning duke again received the magistracy, to whom he was still more gracious than on the former occasion. He had reflected, his discourse was touching, persuasive, and paternal. All were affected even to tears, and we, young creatures that we were, wept with the others without knowing why. At noon, he departed in his carriage for Stuttgard, and his possessions beyond the Rhine. The cavalry of the town escorted him to the frontiers of the comté of Montbéliard. All were delighted with him, especially the Princess Dorothea, to whom he had presented a very handsome ring. The kindness of this dear princess for me neither time or distance has been able to change. I loved her passionately, as indeed did every person who knew her, and nobody ever merited affection more than she. She

was unaffected, witty, without the least pretension, free from all coquetry, and, above all, gifted with the gentlest disposition. She made no secret of her affection for me, and always called me *Amie*, no matter who may be present. When I was absent, she wrote to me constantly begging me to return; she could not exist without me, nor, indeed, I without her; if I may be allowed so to express myself, considering the high respect I bear her. The princess, her mother, had the greatest confidence in me. She wished me to be constantly with her daughter; and notwithstanding the difference of our ages, our amusements were in common. "My dear Lanele," said she to me, "you are sensible, and studious, and I would be very glad to give you as a model to my daughter; she loves you so much that she will feel pleasure in imitating you."

I have before told, that I was canoness of a Protestant chapter, which had the same claims to nobility and the same customs as Catholic chapters. I was, therefore, called the Countess Henriette de Waldner. Why I was called Lane, or Lanele, I will now tell. Indeed, giving soubriquets was a custom at Montbéliard, which displeased Madame Boreck, who said truly, that it was very ill-bred. Our only gratitude for her advice was, to bestow a name upon herself. We called her my

Lady Carcasso, for which may God forgive us! She was frightfully thin, and was constantly telling us of an Englishman that she had known when she was young, whom she called *Milord Carcasso.* It could not have been his name, or anything like it. No Englishman, no Christian, could have such a name as Carcasso.

My surname of Lane, or Lanele, arose from a disguise that I wore during the carnival. I was dressed as a Catalane, and they were kind enough to say that I performed my part very well. For several days everybody called me Catalane. The youngest of the little princes, who was only beginning to speak, could not pronounce the entire word; and, therefore, contented himself with the termination, and having great affection for me, he was constantly calling *Lane! Lane!* The Princess Dorothea changed it into Lanele, and thus I was baptized for the remainder of my life in the house of Montbéliard.

From all this it may be perceived that I passed a great part of my time at Montbéliard; it was become a second home for me, and I was loved and looked upon as a child of the house. I was still there on 24th of April 1771, when the princess's seventh son was born (he was called Alexander Frederick Charles*). The union of the

* Prince Alexander, married to the Princess Antoinette

princes of Montbéliard was certainly blessed by heaven, and notwithstanding the number of their children, each additional one was received with as much joy as if it had been the first-born. All the principality, both poor and rich, shared in the happiness of their rulers. H.S.H. celebrated this happy event by opening the theatre at Etupes, to our great delight.

We were permitted to establish ourselves at Etupes, with Madame Boreck and several other grave ladies of the court, until the perfect recovery of the princess, when our amusements were to commence. We preferred the château of Etupes and its delicious gardens to any residence in the world. One might enjoy there the same ease and freedom as in the house of a rich private person who would wish to see all around him gay and happy. How well I remember those gardens, which are even more beautiful now than they were then, the trees being higher, and the buildings having lost that extreme whiteness which shocks the eye, according to M. Tronchin, of Geneva, who is considered an authority on these matters. The arrangements are perfect; the orangery is considered one of the most beautiful in Germany. But one of its greatest

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of Saxe Coburg, was father of the Duke Alexander of Wurtemberg born in 1804, married 1837 to the Princess Mary of Orleans, who died in 1839.

charms is a small temple (a happy idea of the princess) formed of rose-trees: the most delicious place in the world for reading or conversation.

The dairy is built à la Suisse, ornamented with superb vases of façenza, a kind of ware made in the sixteenth century, which, though coarsely painted, is very much prized by connoisseurs for its correct drawing and beautiful designs. I would much prefer the pretty Saxon porcelain to these old earthen vases, but it appears that these latter are rarer. The grottoes are encrusted with very curious stalactites, which sparkle like diamonds when these places are illuminated. There are several of these grottoes on artificial islands, in the river, which are connected by Chinese bridges.

In the park is a triumphal arch, erected in honour of Frederick the Great, supported by Corinthian pillars, of which the bases and capitals were brought from the ruins of Mondau, formerly Epomandarum, a village in the comté of Montbéliard, to the south of the town.

During the eight days immediately preceding the commencement of our theatrical amusements, we (to use the biblical language of M. de Boreck) tabernacled in the *soi-disant* hut of a wood-burner, isolated in the midst of a forest. Its exterior corresponded exactly with its designation, but within, thanks to the princess it was the per-

fection of refinement. The furniture, simple and elegant, had been ordered from Paris, and though destined for a rustic dwelling, gave undoubted proofs of the good taste which had directed its selection. The Princess Dorothea was so delighted with this romantic cottage, that she declared we should sleep there if it were only for one night. When Madame Hendel heard of this arrangement, she hooted like an owl, declaring that it would be an eternal disgrace to the reigning house. However, she was obliged to submit; but for many years after, when her young mistress had become grand-duchess of Russia, she would point with a tragic air to the cottage, saying,—"To think that the future empress of all the *Moscovies* had slept there!" Besides our favoured hut, we had many other amusements to wile away the time. There was a temple dedicated to Flora, whose statue we used to crown with garlands of wild-flowers. We made bowling-greens of the grass plots (to the horror of the gardeners), and many long and happy hours we spent in the aviaries, listening to the warbling of the birds, and feeding them with bread, cake, and fresh herbs. We taught parrots to speak; and what ridiculous things the young princes used to make them repeat!

Afterwards, when the family were dispersed, a column was erected in a retired and shady part of

the grounds, and dedicated to "*The Absent,*" whose initials were engraved upon it. How often the princess of Montbéliard and I have stood before this monument of affection, speaking with tears of her who was never to return! It is a painful condition annexed to the high position of princes, that their natural sentiments and affections must often yield to political reasons. The Princess Dorothea would have been too happy if she could have remained near her mother. She was forced to purchase one blessing by the sacrifice of another; and often amidst the pomp of St. Petersburg she regretted the retired home where she had been so much beloved. She has often done me the honour of saying to me, that if she had the power of choosing between her splendid destiny and the happiness of living obscurely at Etupes with her husband and parents, she would not hesitate for a moment; so little influence had ambition over her mind.

The day after our arrival at Etupes, as we were looking at the milking of the cows, a page came to tell the Princess Dorothea that a hermit who had lately come to live at the hermitage begged that she would do him the honour of paying him a visit.

"Immediately?" said she.

"Immediately, if your highness wish."

"He is waiting for me; and what shall I do with my cream?"

"If your highness could eat it as you walk along?"

"Or rather carry it to the hermit. Come, Lanele, it is some trick of my brothers, but I will let them see that I can repay them."

The bell of the hermitage (which was situated on a rising ground, and which was a great addition to the beauty of the scenery) tolled without ceasing. The page, count of Wartensleben (son of the countess of Wartensleben, of whom I have already spoken, and captain in Anhalt), walked before us very gravely, and replied to the questions of the princess only with "Her highness shall see," which annoyed us very much. We arrived at last, expecting to find there a troop of waggish young princes, but with what astonishment and respect we drew back when we saw before us the Duke Charles, who always found such pleasure in taking us by surprise. He was now come to inquire into the affairs of the province, and remained with us until the following August. Amongst other things with which he had occupied himself during this time, was a law which he framed concerning agriculture, for which he was blessed by the entire population. This little state will be sure to have a well-ordered government now that H.S.H. has

turned his attention to the consideration of public affairs. The most important personage of the magistracy is the baillie, next the chancellor, then follow the councillors or members of the regency, whose number is unlimited, and last of all the procureur-général. The councillors formerly wore robes half yellow and half black, which were the colours of the house of Wurtemberg. All these lesser wheels of the government worked admirably under the immediate authority of the reigning duke. (It was afterwards that he appointed his brother stadtholder.) These gradations of authority commencing with the people, and ending with the ruler, seems to me perfectly well organized. What more could one wish for?

All this time I have said nothing of our little comedy. I must now return to it. The duke was very amiable in his hermitage, and wishing to play his part to the end, he offered to tell our fortunes.

"You, my niece, will be married to an old elector, one-eyed and lame, who will not allow you to receive any visitors, and your entire court will be composed of apes, that your husband may appear handsome by contrast. You, Countess Henrietta, will remain a canoness, or you may be married to the prime minister of the elector, who will be withered and toothless, and who will go

rabbit-hunting in a wheelbarrow, with you knitting beside him."

"Can your reverence see anything else?" asked the princess, laughing.

"I see a very brilliant star, which, I think, is yours, but it is a falling star, your friend's shines beneath. Really there never was seen so great an attraction between stars."

"Oh! that is because I love Lanele so well," said this adorable princess, embracing me. The duke remained with us all the evening, and came to see us almost every day, until the opening of our theatre. The dancers were sent from Vienna. The piece chosen was the ballet of Medea, composed some years before by M. Noverre. This ballet had been originally performed at the court of Stuttgard by the celebrated Vestris, so that the duke knew it and admired it exceedingly. He regretted Vestris very much, for the dancers from Vienna were far inferior to this celebrated artiste. To us, ignorant peasants of Alsace, they were magnificent. No performance ever amused me so much; the remembrance of it can never be effaced from my mind; first impressions are so vivid.

I still remember the dress I wore; it was a beautiful quesaco. Madame de Boreck said that I emanated from the spirit of my dress.

"You think that the dress of the Countess

Henrietta has a spirit, madam, and that she has a separate existence besides; that is very fortunate, for I know a great many persons whose only existence is in their dress."

The person who said this was M. de Beroldengen, dean of the chapter of Murbach, who was a man of refined wit, and somewhat inclined to epicurism, which latter quality he contrived to render unnoticed by his witty conversation. He often came to Montbéliard with the prince of Rathsamhausen, abbe of the united chapters of Murbach and Lure. This latter died in '86, in the odour of sanctity. He was good and tolerant, as became a true minister of God, to whatever communion he may belong. I remember once that the baron de Wurmser related before him the sad tale of M. de Bombelles, and that he reproved him with mildness and firmness. As I am not a saint, I may tell this story, of which the authenticity is much disputed. I have learned many of the details of this affair during my visits to Paris, where I was very intimate with the Bombelles family, who most certainly were calumniated on this occasion. People *will* give a decided judgment, though it is almost impossible to know all the *minor* circumstances of any case, which, however trifling they may be in themselves, would, if known, justify what otherwise seems unjustifiable.

The public papers tell that an officer of the Piedmont regiment, the viscount of Bombelles, had married some years before, somewhere in the interior, a Protestant young lady. The marriage ceremony was performed in both churches, and the lady and gentleman lived together for some time, when the gentleman unexpectedly marries another, saying that his first marriage was not binding, in consequence of the laws passed against the Protestants.

If this be really the fact (I merely relate it to show that I was not ignorant of what was taking place around me), there may be some powerful reasons of which the public are ignorant, that would explain and perhaps excuse this extraordinary affair. Circumstances are sometimes stronger than our inclinations. I neither approve nor blame; my conscience and my position could not permit me to do either. It is said, however (to be impartial one must tell everything), that the council of the military school where M. de Bombelles has been educated, have been greatly annoyed by these reports, and that they have written to him in the name of the school, expressing their sorrow and indignation for such conduct, feeling that the disgrace attending it would in some measure fall upon them, and requesting that, if public report were correct, that he would not again present himself

amongst them. I cannot believe all this. The Bombelles family, with whom we are acquainted, and who possess many fiefs in Alsace, is one of the most honourable and respectable families that I know. It would give me great pain to think that its honour should receive so deep a wound. Thanks to heaven and to Louis XVI., such things cannot happen again; the edict by which the validity of Protestant marriages is recognised is one of the greatest benefits which this wise and virtuous monarch has conferred upon his people. We Alsatians never had anything to fear on this account, the treaty by which Alsace was reunited to France having secured all our rights. We did not, on that account, feel the less pleasure at the justice granted to our brethren in the other provinces, as everything concerning the Protestant religion is of equal importance to all its members.

1772.—At this time a great many visitors came to Montbéliard, whose names it will give me pleasure to recall. The memories of one's youth are like preserved flowers; one loves to breathe their faint perfume, to revive those faded hues that were once so beautiful and fresh. I would not have much confidence in any person who would have an objection to review the past; it would seem to me as if memory could only bring them remorse.

One of the persons whose appearance struck me

most was the baron de Glaubitz. He was tall, and had been as handsome as the god of day (as some ladies tell who were acquainted with him formerly). He still retained many traces of this beauty, when I saw him, although he was then nearly sixty years of age. His teeth were very good. During his journey he stopped some days at Belfort, where he had been present at some discussion which took place between the dependents of the duchess of Mazarin and those of the duke of Wurtemberg. He related this affair, mingled with various anecdotes of Madame de Mazarin, in the most amusing manner possible. She had made an exchange with the duke of the dues and revenues that they respectively possessed in the different villages and the Alsatian territories in the comté of Montbéliard. This arrangement, which had been sanctioned by the king, and concluded by the duke's giving up his claims in these places, was the cause of much embarrassment between the inferior agents of these two powers, who pretended that it was due to the honour of their masters that they should not yield. I have often heard H.S.H. complain very much of this.

Madame de Mazarin, *née* Durfort de Duras, is daughter of a Laporte-Mazarini, last heiress of this family and of this title. She was married to the duke Villequier, son of the duke d'Aumont, and

brought to him the duchies Meilleraye and Mazarin, from which they take their title. The duchess is certainly one of the most singular women of this century. She was handsome, but her beauty seemed only to serve as a foil for that of others ; she was tall, and strong as a caryatide. Her shoulders were bent, as if under a great pressure. M. de Wittgenstein (he was then colonel, but has since become general of Anhalt) used to say that she was stooping under her own weight. She had a great deal of wit, and an immense fortune, both of which she lavished unsparingly, and was only laughed at in return. M. de Wittgenstein possessed a talent for refined and delicate raillery, which was duly appreciated at Montbéliard. There were also there several general officers and some other persons, in consequence of the assembling of several regiments near Belfort to exercise their men, for some reason or other that I forget. We had the baron de Reinbach (colonel of the regiment of Alsace, under M. de Wurmser ; the general de Strahlenheim, by birth a Swede, brave as a lion ; and the old General Oberheim, who is still alive, and may live for ever if time continues to treat him as gently as heretofore ; the old General Wangen, who had been colonel of the regiment of Alsace ; and many others. For several days the conversation in the drawing-room of Etupes was

entirely on military affairs. The baron d'Obenheim, who had been musketeer in 1722, entertained us with an account of the Marshal de Berwick. Another, M. de Hartmans (whose name I forgot to mention before), major in the Swiss regiment of Jenner, told how he had been wounded in 1759. A third (the Baron Christian de Glaubitz) had been imprisoned in Frauenburg and Embsdorff in '41 and in '60. We felt more pleasure in looking at this latter gentleman than in listening to him. There was a long discussion about the order of military merit instituted in '59, by Louis XV., to recompense his Protestant subjects, as the cross of St. Louis could only be given to Catholics.

This order has three grades of dignity: "The Grand Cross," "Commanders," and "Knights."

On this occasion everybody spoke in the highest terms of my uncle the count de Waldner, who, with the prince of Nassau-Saarbruck, was the first grand cross appointed by the king, although he was at that time only marshal-de-camp. This distinguished honour was still more enhanced by the flattering expressions with which Louis XV. accompanied it.

"In instituting this order, M. le count," said he to him, "it was of you I was thinking."

The Baron Diesken and Baron Wurmser had been created commanders of the order at its insti-

tution. Four grand crosses had been appointed since.

1759—Baron Waldner.
1743—Baron Wurmser.
1770—Prince Anhalt Coethen.
1770—Baron d'Erlach of Biggisby.

The rank and honours are the same as in the order of St. Louis. The ribbon is blue, the cross gold enamelled with white, and bears a sword *en pal.* The motto—"Pro virtute bellica."

I hope I will be pardoned this digression, it came almost involuntarily from my pen, at the mention of this order of which we Protestants are so justly proud. I can assure you that I felt extremely flattered and delighted by the manner in which so many men of distinguished rank and merit spoke of my uncle, and my father and I determined to pay him a visit at his château d'Ollwillon. It was with great difficulty that we were permitted to leave Montbéliard, and the Princess Dorothea would scarcely speak to me the day before our departure. However, we were reconciled before I left, on condition that I should return in eight days. I felt quite low-spirited on setting out, but my grief was soon forgotten in the amusement excited by two very grotesque-looking Jews that I saw on the bridge at Montbéliard. (It requires but little to dry the tears of youth.) They

had two parallel strokes of white chalk on each of their hats, I asked one of our servants if he knew the reason:—

"That means, Mademoiselle la comtesse," said he, "that they have paid six sous nine deniers; a tax imposed on the Jews for passing this bridge."

Poor Jews! they must pay for everything; but they know how to regain their money with *interest*. This nation, with its eternal brand, is a living proof of the truth of the Gospel; and I cannot comprehend why they do not become converts to Christianity. To believe they need only look upon themselves.

Ollwillon is a magnificent château, and one of the finest domains of Alsace. My uncle had it rebuilt before I was born, so that I never saw the ancient château. It is situated in the centre of Soultz. M. de Waldner was married in 1748 to Mademoiselle Heusse de Vologer (she was a year older than he), daughter of the marquis de Vologer, a very rich fermier-général, whom the king had raised to a marquisate. She brought my uncle a very large fortune, which had enabled him to rebuild his ancestral castle.

I hope that I will be pardoned if I say a few words more of this count de Waldner, of whom I do not think it too much to assert that he is not only an honour to our family, but also to our province;

and I think it may be permitted to his niece to speak of his talents and his services. I cannot understand that false modesty which would not allow us to mention the nobler qualities of our relations, whilst it gives us full liberty to proclaim their defects.

The Count Dagobert de Waldner, my father's second brother, is most undoubtedly a distinguished man. He is endowed, as well as his brothers, with a noble and handsome countenance, and looks extremely well in his military uniform, He was born in 1712, and entered the army at fourteen as ensign in the regiment of Pfiffer-Suisse. He raised a company in 1734, and in 1741 he was made captain of the regiment of Swiss guards. He distinguished himself at the sieges of Menin, Ypres, Fribourg, and Tournay, and also in the battle of Lafeld. In 1755 he became second colonel, and in two years after, by the death of M. de Wittener, full colonel of the regiment which he commanded at the battle of Busbach. He was appointed marshal-de-camp in 1758, and lieutenant-general in 1762.

I have already told how my uncle had been made grand cross of the order of military merit on the day of its institution by Louis XV. in 1759.

The king had already recompensed his services

by granting him, in 1752, the title of count, transmissible to my father should the Count Dagobert die without posterity; which seems very likely to happen.

I hope that these *records of service*—to use a military phrase—will not appear out of place in these memoirs. I speak but little of myself or my relatives except when I consider it absolutely necessary for the clearness or authenticity of what I relate. This count de Waldner was the hero of my youth; my young imagination had been excited by the fame of his *deeds of arms*, his virtues, and his benevolence. I love him extremely, and I would wish that my daughter, in inheriting this sentiment, should know the source from which it sprung. We were very well received at Ollwillon, where M. de Waldner held great state.* I was very happy there. They were thinking of giving a ball for me, when I received a letter from my dear Princess Dorothèa scolding me for having exceeded my leave of absence, and announcing the birth of a young prince. This was her royal highness's eighth son. They wished me to be present at the baptism, and I was obliged to leave all the pleasures of my uncle's château to comply with this invita-

* The portrait of the count de Waldner may be seen in the portrait gallery of the historical museum at Versailles.

tion. The child was called Henry Frederick Charles. He is now seventeen (1789), and is certainly a prince in every way remarkable. He is frank, affable, and possesses a very high sense of honour. On the day of his baptism I got a very heavy cold, although it was the month of July. The Princess Dorothea and I persisted in taking a walk in the garden although it rained in torrents, and both got wet in our feet. I have very good cause to remember that cold, for I was not completely rid of it for six months. We were both obliged to keep our room; and I do not know how it happened that our conversation should be about public affairs, and the aggrandizement of Russia by the division of Poland. I have already observed that the princess seemed to have a presentiment of her future dignity. She took more interest in this great northern power than in any other. We hazarded many profound conjectures, and discoursed very sensibly about this division, interrupted by sneezing and occasional draughts of barley-water. Amongst other persons, we spoke of a certain Muscovite gentleman, whose name I forget, but at the mention of which we always laughed immoderately, because it happened that every time the princess attempted to pronounce it she was seized with a violent fit of sneezing. He was fortunately dead at the time of her marriage,

or he might have caused her an eternal cold in the head.

The total dissolution of the order of Jesuits by the Bull of Pope Clement XIV. was one of the most important events of the year '73. I will not make any reflection on this affair, as I do not consider myself competent to judge either of monks or of the Catholic religion.

Louis XV. died, and Louis XVI. ascended the throne on the 10th of May 1774. This reign opened with the most brilliant prospects, in which the people of Alsace took particular interest in compliment to Marie Antoinette. However, the baron de Wurmser remarked, that the princesses of the house of Austria never brought good fortune to France.

The mourning for the king delayed for some time the introduction of a very ridiculous fashion which usurped the place of the *quesaco*. This was the *pouf au sentiment*. It was a head-dress, into which may be introduced the likeness of any person or thing for which one may feel affection, such as a miniature of one's daughter or mother, a picture of a canary or a dog, &c., &c., adorned with the hair of a father or of a beloved friend. It was a most incredible piece of extravagance. We were determined to follow the fashion, and the Princess Dorothea once amused herself for an entire day by

wearing on her ear the picture of a woman holding a bunch of keys, and which she declared was Madame Hendel. The *femme-de-charge* thought it a striking likeness, and was almost out of her senses with pride and joy.

1775. The princes of Montbéliard were very much annoyed by the conduct of the margrave of Baruth, who, to the great scandal of the entire nobility, had brought from Paris Mademoiselle Clairon, an actress, to be governess to his children, Her royal highness could not repress her indignation.

"Is there no means," said she, "of restraining that foolish old man? Must we submit to see the affairs of the margraviate, and the education of the young princes, placed in the hands of a *fille de théâtre*, who has already shown what she is capable of."

"But she can at least teach them to wear a court dress, and to pronounce a harangue correctly, madam," said the prince, who wished to teaze her a little.

"Fie, sir," said she, "you ought rather to be ashamed than to laugh at it, for he is your ally. What! Melpomene for prime minister! She who has been constantly exciting quarrels in the green-room will most certainly set the whole principality by the ears. But the margrave will only get what he deserves."

At this moment M. de Wurmser entered with a mournful piece of intelligence, which caused this affair to be forgotten for some days. The duke of Deux-Ponts had been killed at the chase some days before, the stag having unexpectedly turned, and darting on him, killed him on the spot. This prince was very much regretted, and particularly on account of the manner of his death. Her royal highness the princess of Montbéliard, however, could never entirely forgive his having embraced the Catholic religion. She never mentioned this subject before the prince, but often spoke largely of it when we were alone. Christian III., duke of Deux-Ponts, was descended from the house of Berkenfeld. His father, duke of Berkenfeld, succeeded to Deux-Ponts as Christian II. in 1734. The succession had been disputed by the prince palatine, but the dispute was settled by arbitration.

The duke, Christian III., was succeeded as prince of Deux-Ponts by his nephew.

This was a year of accidents. A duel occurred in Strasburg, in which we felt great interest, as we were acquainted with both parties concerned. The baron de Pirch, several years before this event, had left the Prussian service, for some reason of which I am ignorant, and entered that of France. He was a man of great talent and extensive

information, and who seemed to be destined for a brilliant career. He has written several valuable works on military tactics. He was at the time of which I speak captain in the regiment of Anhalt, garrisoned in Strasburg. One of his brother officers, jealous it is said of his talents and position, sought a quarrel with him, the consequence of which was a duel, in which the baron was dangerously wounded. Fortunately he did not die, and his adversary was overwhelmed with the reproaches and contempt of everybody. We admired Baron Pirch very much; his manners were so dignified and refined; and he was constantly cited as a model for the young nobles. This passion for fighting duels has caused a great deal of sorrow in France; how many children has it not torn from their mothers! how many husbands from their wives! The idea of honour which is annexed to it cannot be easily argued away, and we are forced to submit to that which we cannot overcome.

During this interval I had made many journeys, with my father to Schweighausen, of which I do not think it necessary to speak farther. I abridge these years of my youth that I may arrive the sooner at a more interesting portion of my life, when I was acquainted with many eminent and illustrious persons. However, our little court at

Montbéliard possessed more charms and interests than at first would appear possible. But the time is coming when I will have other things to speak of.

CHAPTER IV.

Strasburg—Duke d'Aiguillon, Marshal Contades, Baron Lort, M. de Marzy - Madame Berekheim—M. de Dietrich —M. and Madame Franck—Luxury of Prince Heyderscheim—Chapter of Ollmarsheim—Mademoiselle de Flachsland—Fashionable colours—Lavater's letter—I send him my silhouette—Consecration of the bishop of Basle—Hereditary charge of Rothberg—House of Wangen—M. Göthe writes to me—Strange letter from M. Lavater—My marriage—Baron Oberkirch—Messrs. de Wurmser—I write to Princess Dorothea—Conversation with my father—Interview—Kindness of the princes of Wurtemberg—The wedding day—M. de Turckheim—The dowager baroness Oberkirch, *née* de Buch—Another letter from M. Lavater—Marriage of Princess Dorothea—Negotiation of Prince Henry of Prussia—His connection with Catherine II.—The Grand-duke Paul Petrowitz sets out for Berlin—Departure of the princess—Sad adieus—She writes to me the day of her interview with the prince—Her letter—She is re-baptized and called Mary Fœderowna—Nuptials—Another letter from the grand-duchess—She sets out for St. Petersburg—She writes again to me—Charming letter—Return of her parents to Montbéliard—Touching episode—Letter of M. Wieland.

My father wished to go to Strasburg this year, 1776. We were delighted with our visit; the society was of the highest fashion, numerous and exceedingly gay. I began to love balls and fêtes; it was natural at my age; however, I have never

transgressed the bounds of the severe morality in which I was educated, nor swerved for a moment from the hereditary dignity of my family. We Protestants are accused of stiffness; we certainly set a high value upon reserve in the conduct of women, and strict moral principles. We are convinced that the purest happiness is to be found in domestic life, in a close adherence to the rules of honour, and a solemn respect for the holiness of the marriage tie. We are perhaps on that account less fascinating, but more trustworthy.

The duke d'Aiguillon, governor of the province of Alsace, was not resident. The maréchal de Contades, commander-in-chief, came sometimes. We often saw the baron de Lort, the king's lieutenant at Strasburg, commander of St. Louis and of St. Lazare. We had a very fine house, and entertained respectably. M. de Marzy, brigadier, commander of the military school, cared only for the society of military men; we met at his house all the officers of the garrison.

In our own family we had a great deal of society; first Monsieur and Madame Berekheim de Schoppenwyr. Monsieur de Berekheim was captain in the regiment of Alsace. He was my uncle after the fashion of Bretagne, being cousin-german to my mother. Madame de Berekheim was a Glaubitz. Monsieur Jean (*hors*) de Dietrich, eldest son of

the baron de Dietrich, whose wife was also a Glaubitz.

M. and Madame Franck, bankers, were on an equality with the first people in the city, and went into the best society. Our nobility are, however, very exclusive, and justly so; they are one of the oldest aristocracies in Europe. I shall often have occasion to speak of these excellent Francks, who have rendered good service to their country.

My father was at that time very busy as President of the Directory of the resident nobility of l'Ortenau; however he found time to visit the grand prior of Malta at Heydersheim. The baron de Waldner was commander of the order of St. John, and etiquette required him to offer this attention to the highest dignitary of the order in Germany. He had, from different causes, long delayed this visit, perhaps it was that I retained him at Montbéliard where I went often, and stayed as long as possible. The grand prior went to Heydersheim, in Brisgau; the city belonged to him, having been given to the order of St. John of Jerusalem by the margrave of Baden-Hochberg, in 1296. He bears the title of prince of Heydersheim, and sits at the Diet as ecclesiastical prince immediately after the abbot de Murbach. He claims the sovereignty of the subjects of the grand priory, but the house of Austria contests the claim.

There is one thing very clear, that if the grand prior furnishes his contingent to the empire, and sends part of the revenue of his offices to Malta, he still reserves the greater part for himself, for he is very rich, and distinguished for his splendour through all Germany, where he spends a great deal of money.*

During the absence of my father I made a most agreeable visit, for which I had his permission. I went to pass *my widowhood* at Altkirch, at the noble chapter of Oltmarskeim. Mde. de Flachsland, who was abbess since 1757, was one of my mother's dearest friends, and she every year asked me to visit her. I met there charming young persons amongst the canonesses, who all bore the title of baroness. They practised a thousand endearing arts to induce me to remain longer with them.

These eight days were passed in walking, in examining the remains of Roman antiquities, in singing and laughing a great deal, and even in dancing, for they saw a great deal of society at the abbey; but above all, in speaking of the newest fashions. I was questioned very closely about my toilette. The baronesses wore high plumes upon their heads, a style of coiffure which suits only tall women; the chins of the smaller ladies appeared midway

* He died the following year, and the count de Reinsch de Foussemagne was elected in his stead.

between their feet and the tips of these nodding plumes. The colours then in fashion were what was called *cheveux de la reine;* this was a pale grey and a brownish violet, first worn by her majesty, and which the king said resembled a puce (flea). That shade of colour still retains the name, though it varied for some time between *cuisse de puce, ventre de puce, dos de puce.** All that is so French. The abbess, amiable and witty, though she was no longer young, jested with us about these *serious* things.

On arriving at Strasburg, after bidding a tender farewell to my new friends, I found a letter which interested me very much, and of which I was quite proud. It was from M. Lavater, a Protestant minister at Zurich, who had devoted much time to tracing the relation which exists between the temper, the sentiments of the soul, and the features of the human countenance. He had been at Etupes the previous autumn, and my friends had spoken to him of me in a most flattering manner. Here is the letter :—

" Dare I (am I to speak as an acquaintance or as a stranger?) ask you a favour, and a benefit, ex-

* We fear that a literal translation of these terms would be too broad for English ears. It is sufficient to say that the shade retains still the name of puce colour.

cellent countess? All good people are connected by invisible and indissoluble bonds. They feel an inclination to love and to become acquainted with one another; and when they cannot meet personally they at least give each other a description of their respective features. You assuredly know what worship I have vowed to the physiognomy of wise and virtuous persons. Thus, without further preamble, will I pray your noble and good heart to send me your *silhouette*,* correctly and faithfully drawn, persuaded already that you will find a pleasure in doing that which will cause me so great a happiness. Let me only see a means of doing you, in my turn, the slightest service.

"J. G. LAVATER.

"Zurich, 11th February 1776."

It is scarcely necessary to say that this letter was written in German, and that this is a literal translation. I did not think that I ought to refuse my silhouette, and my father permitted me to send it. M. Lavater was seldom mistaken. I have known instances where his opinion was wonderfully correct. It was very interesting to hear him explain his doctrine which was perfectly clear and easily understood. He pointed out at Etupes the evil disposition of a confidential servant, and

* A profile likeness in black.

the event justified the truth of his doctrine. The prince de Montbéliard frequently cited this example, and believed in M. Lavater as firmly as in God.

My father was at home before me, and received me with rapture. Whilst we were relating our respective adventures during the eight days of separation, there was announced Monseigneur the bishop of Basle, the baron de Wangen de Geroldseck, who came in person to invite us to his consecration. It was to take place on the first of the approaching month of March. The bishop of Basle is a nobleman of high rank ; and it is worthy of remark that there exist in Alsace high ecclesiastical dignities, notwithstanding the differences of religion which divide the country. The bishop of Basle is spiritual and temporal sovereign of this bishopric, which forms a pretty considerable principality. The city of Basle, which formerly made part of the bishopric, has embraced Calvinism, and is no longer under the authority of the bishop, who resides at Porentiery, the capital of this sovereignty since the reformation. This city lies on the frontiers of Alsace, and its cathedral has a chapter of eighteen noble canons. The next considerable city is Délémont. The bishop is in alliance with seven Swiss cantons, and is under the spiritual jurisdiction of the archbishopric of

Besançon. He ranks at the Diet before the bishop of Liège.

The Rothbergs hold here a very important hereditary office. They fixed themselves in the neighbourhood of Basle in the tenth century, as well as the Flachslands and a branch of the Andlaus, after the Hungarians had laid waste and depopulated this country in the reign of Rodolph II.

M. de Wangen is about fifty years of age—a worthy man, and devoted to his duties. When he will be consecrated, nothing more will remain for him to do but to take an oath before the emperor; a ceremony which will take place, as he told us, very shortly. By how many bonds is this country still connected with Germany!

The family of Wangen is one of the most ancient of Alsace, and was formerly one of the most powerful. The Emperor Sigismond bestowed upon the Wangens the castle of Geroldseck, and other fiefs of the house of that name which had just become extinct. Gerold, father-in-law of Charlemagne, had built this castle on one of the mountains of Vosges quite close to Saverne. The present baron de Wangen is a general officer. He commanded the regiment of Alsace, and was wounded and made prisoner in the affair at Clostercamp in 1760, which obtained him the rank of field-marshal.

If I linger a little too long over these records of ancient days, it is because that, if we are to credit general appearances, they are about to disappear for ever, and I would wish to conserve the remembrance of them for myself and my children. Alas! how saddening it is to think that soon, very soon, only slight traces of those ancient laws will remain which protected our ancestors, and beneath which they lived happy during so many centuries! Everything here below passes away—everything is destroyed; the best as well as the worst have their appointed term, good and ill are alike transient; all flits rapidly beneath the eye of the Sovereign Master, who is alone immutable and eternal.

A literary star must have presided over my destiny this year. M. Göthe sent me a copy of his 'Claudine,' which I have found as deeply affecting as his 'Werther.' I am an enthusiastic admirer of this poet: I have read his tragedy of 'Götz de Berlichingen' at least twenty times, and always with fresh emotion. M. Göthe finished his studies at Strasburg, and was there when the dauphiness, our present beloved queen, passed through. I will insert here the letter which accompanied the copy of 'Claudine'—

"I send you my 'Claudine;' may it procure you an agreeable moment! During my author-life (in

other respects a wearying pathway), I have been fortunate enough to meet and to appreciate many worthy people, many noble minds, amongst whom I find a pleasure in classing you. It is for such in particular that I delight to describe what most deeply impresses my mind and heart; by this you will understand that I write for you. I think I ought to send you these few lines, which I know you will receive with indulgence. May you live as happy as one ought to be with a heart like yours, and deign to number me always amongst the most devoted of your servants.

" GÖTHE.

" Weimar, 13th May 1776."

I have neglected to say, and indeed I do not know how it could have escaped me—I have neglected then to speak of a journey that M. Göthe made to Montbéliard where I saw him, and offered him the tribute of admiration which he deserved. He was good enough to form an opinion of me of which I was unworthy. Every one was so kind to *Lanele* at Montbéliard! They overwhelmed me with kindness, and spoiled me with so good a grace. Tears spring to my eyes when I think of it. Oh! one could never again make such friends; one must be young, in the first flush of the illusions and affections of youth, to form such attachments. I feel it every

day more and more, as Time's cold wing flitting by chills and hardens the heart.

M. Lavater replied to me by a letter so strange that I did not know, and do not yet know, what to think of it. I had sent him a sketch of myself; many others had done the like, and I attached no importance to this present, if it were one. I wrote him a polite letter. I am not capable of granting a favour ungraciously. M. Lavater has the reputation of being a pious and estimable minister; the word *pastor* is underlined after his signature. I think then that his letter proves a want of good taste, or it is more probably the result of his mystic imagination. However that may be, here is the letter. Let every one judge for himself:—

"The most delicious, dare I say mother, sister, friend? how shall I thank you for your double gift, for your dear likeness? Still, what is it? Pardon me a bold request, but we give again to those to whom we have once given. I am not yet satisfied. I have your *silhouette;* it is only a shadow! which contains more and less truth than your miniature, (for what would not this latter express!) which I also wish to have, but it must be as close in the resemblance and as finely executed as the gift which I received enclosed. I am frank, because I believe, I love, I hope—ever more and more. I say little, my

sentiments are profound. Oh! that I cannot perfectly express all my thoughts, and say all that I feel.

"I kiss your beneficent hand,

"JOHN GASPARD LAVATER,

"*Pastor.*

"Zurich, 22nd March 1776."

A lady of Versailles would certainly have amused herself with this "*all that I feel.*" I contented myself with not replying, and keeping to myself a circumstance that may throw ridicule upon a minister of our religion. I had besides something else to do. My marriage with M. d'Oberkirch had been proposed, and I thought only of the solemn act which was to influence the remainder of my life, and which could not be treated too seriously. Messieurs de Wurmser, our relations, were the first who had thought of this alliance, and spoke of it to my father, who received the proposal favourably. M. d'Oberkirch had served under the orders of the elder, Christian, lieutenant-general, formerly commander of the regiment of Alsace. The younger, Frank de Wurmser, now brigadier, was then lieutenant-colonel of the same regiment. Both were capable of appreciating the bravery and the moral qualities of M. d'Oberkirch, who besides was their relative through the Buchs. The noble families of

Alsace are all connected. Frank de Wurmser was also colonel of the regiment of foreign volunteers de Wurmser; M. de Tort de St. Victor served under him as commanding-colonel.

The Baron Siegfried d'Oberkirch, head of the Protestant branch of his family, appeared to all my family a suitable match. Descendants of knights who figured in the tournaments of the twelfth century, they possess the fief of Oberkirch in Lower Alsace. During several centuries they have ranked amongst the noble families governing Strasburg, and the title of princess has been borne by several ladies of this house, amongst others by two abbesses of Hohenbourg (Saint Odile).

M. d'Oberkirch was handsome, though not remarkably so. He was of small stature, but of a highly *distingué* air, and a most amiable expression of countenance. He had a good understanding, and as much information as a man could acquire who had entered the army so young. He was talked of in Strasburg as a model of perfect elegance, and it may be said that he led the fashion there, though he was forty years of age.

Breveted ensign in 1746, at eleven years of age, in the Royal Swedish Regiment, it was only in 1749 that he commenced to serve in the regiment of Alsace. In 1758 he received a captain's commission in the Royal Deux-Ponts: he made four

campaigns, and fought several battles. He received the cross of military merit in 1763, and quitted the service. He is one of the nobles of the council of the Chamber of Fifteen in the senate of the free city of Strasburg, as his ancestors have been from time immemorial. His father was also Stattmeister, that is to say, president of this senate, in 1748.

There was here a sufficiency of honourable titles, so that on this point I had no fault to find; but I felt some hesitation when I reflected on the difference of age. I was still very young, he was forty; he had mixed a great deal in the world, I was only entering into life: could he love me as I would wish to be loved? May not the habits of soldier-life render it impossible for him to content himself in the narrow circle of domestic duties, without seeking amusements elsewhere? I feared all that, though he pleased me, and precisely because he did please me were my fears so lively. I had remarked him several times in the different circles where we met: my father spoke to me of him at this time. I observed him more closely; I saw that he watched me, and I began to think that he was as much interested as I. Messieurs Wurmser sang me *litanies* in his praise from morning till night. I was inclined to believe them—so well inclined that I did believe them, and I gave my consent.

My father embraced me when I said *yes*. He wept as he blessed me, and pronounced the name of my mother. What a solemn day was that! I had pledged myself for ever—we were not people to retract our word. My father and I supped *tête-à-tête;* we were silent and grave. My father's eyes were never once turned from my face: I was so disturbed that I could not restrain myself—I went over to kiss his hand.

"You will be happy," my dear child, said he, "and if you take my advice, we will hasten to conclude our arrangements. I have remarked at all times that marriages, where the negotiations are protracted, never turn out well. I have acquainted the Messieurs Wurmser with your answer and mine; they have already, in all probability, informed M. d'Oberkirch. Have you any objection that he should be presented here to-morrow?"

"None, father," I replied; "I detest all formalities."

"Well, then, to-morrow the interview shall take place; to-morrow the important day and hour shall be decided. We will have to acquaint all our relatives, and their highnesses at Montbéliard."

"My dear father, if you will allow me, I would prefer going myself to announce my marriage to the duchess."

"We will go together, my dear child, it is a duty."

Immediately after supper my father retired to his room. He was deeply affected, and almost ill. It had been proposed that I should spend part of the year with my mother-in-law; this would be a great privation for my poor father, who had been accustomed to have me always with him. As for me, I was young, and life presented to me a smiling perspective—a husband that would adore me, I was told, and that whom, my heart whispered, I would adore; but my dear, dear father, who was to be henceforth alone for a great part of the year, given up to his memories and his regrets, and who yet consented to what he believed would secure my happiness. How sublime are parents in this constant sacrifice of self, and how seldom do children make an adequate return!

However, I slept little: at six in the morning I was up and dressed, and immediately commenced a letter to the Princess Dorothea. I related to her the whole progress of my projected marriage, my reflections, my tardy consent, and my intention of going to tell her all that *de vive voix*. As soon as my father was risen I went into his room; he was pale, he had evidently suffered much.

"My dear father, are you tormented about me?" I said; "in that case M. d'Oberkirch is too

honourable not to release you from your promise?"

"I was thinking that I, too, married a woman that I loved; that that woman was your mother, and that she will not be witness of your happiness, my dear daughter."

"But, father, she watches over and beholds us!"

I never could comprehend why Catholics pray for the dead, as if it were not much more consoling to think that they pray for us.

Immediately after dinner the Messrs. Wurmser arrived, bringing with them M. d'Oberkirch, more elegantly attired than usual, and not a whit less embarrassed than I—which is saying a great deal. We made each a profound salutation. The elder M. Wurmser took the baron by the hand, and presented him to me in form as my future husband.

"Madam," said my betrothed, with a simplicity that I considered a good omen, "you have made me very happy, and I hope that you will have no cause to regret it."

As to me, I made no reply. I have always remarked that betrothed brides are particularly stupid. My father took the Messieurs Wurmser to the other end of the drawing-room, under pretence of talking about business, and we were left alone. I began to recover myself, and M. d'Oberkirch was no longer afraid of me. He spoke of

different things, keeping still in view the point which he perhaps was as anxious to discuss as I. As I have already observed, he possessed much tact, and manœuvred the matter very well. I wore a dress of puce-coloured brocade, I remember it perfectly well, and a little *chapeau pouf* which was then the highest of fashion. He complimented me on my dress, and immediately added:—

"You study fashion, countess."

"When I have time to think of it."

"Do you follow closely its varying whims?"

"Oh no.—But you?"

"I often anticipate them."

"So I have heard," I said, smiling, though my heart beat quick.

"Does that displease you?"

"No, provided I be the first to whom the secret is communicated."

"Countess, I hope that you do me the honour of reckoning on my politeness. Are you not mistress in your own house, and would your chief servant wear a dress which had not previously met your sanction?"

I felt myself blush; it was the sole expression of my approval.

"My mother will have the honour of visiting you," continued he.

"It is I who ought to pay her my respects."

"Afterwards, I hope; but at present, as only one of us, alas! has a mother, it is she who ought to visit you. She is so kind—she will love you so."

"Oh, I am inclined to love her as much as—"

I stopped short; I was near saying something stupid. M. d'Oberkirch perceived it, and, like a of tact, took no notice.

"I fear that you will not find Quatzenheim as agreeable as Schweighausen; it is a dreary and desert place. My grandfather purchased this place on account of its importance and its revenues; my father and mother found it always very dull.

"And Oberkirch?"

"Oberkirch is still worse: I never go there but during the hunting season. I have the weakness to love this exercise passionately. You will not, I hope, forbid it?"

"Passionately!" resumed I, with a little pout, which, as it seems, did not displease him.

"My dear madam, replied he quickly, if we converse in German we will understand one another better."

It was unnecessary: he pleaded his suit, and I understood him perfectly.

I went with my father to pass some days at Montbéliard to announce my happiness to the prince and princess; both congratulated me sincerely. At my departure the duchess de Mont-

béliard gave me a diamond agraffe, and her august spouse presented me an aigrette; but that which gave me most pleasure was that my dear princess clasped upon my arm her own portrait. I wept on receiving it. I knew that there were vague rumours of her marriage, and that it was possible that we might be soon deprived of her. She did not hide from me a single thought. I knew her timid joy, and the struggle that contending feelings wrought within her heart. Nothing was yet decided; she did not even know the name of her future husband; she knew that he was one of the most illustrious princes in Europe, but of all further particulars she was ignorant.

The day of my arrival at Strasburg, M. d'Oberkirch, brought me an elegant vis-à-vis, and the next day the marriage articles were signed. He sent me very beautiful presents. My mother-in-law gave me a necklace of pearls.

The important day at length arrived. I was all bedecked with English lace. I wore a dress of Venetian point over a white watered slip. M. d'Oberkirch was so exquisitely dressed that every tongue was loud in his praise. His coat of light blue, embroidered with gold, attracted universal admiration. My father wished that he should appear in his uniform, but it was decided that that was impossible.

Amongst the persons present at my marriage were, as a matter of course, my excellent uncle the baron de Berekheim de Ribécauville, second brother of my mother, and married to a Rathamhausen. He was the best of men. He hastened to us at the first intimation of my marriage. He had always felt deeply obliged to my father for not having married a second time. M. de Berekheim de Leyrath, his eldest brother, and my godfather, counsellor of the regency of Baden, whose wife was a Glaubitz. There was also present M. de Turckheim, gentleman in waiting to his highness the duke of Saxe-Weimar. He came direct from Weimar, and brought me intelligence of M. Göthe, who sent his respects and best wishes for my happiness.

On leaving the church we went direct to the Hôtel d'Oberkirch, situated Rue de la Nuée Bleus, near the square St. Pierre le Jeune, between the hôtel of the grand prevôt of the cathedral and the government hôtel. I was to reside there thenceforth with the dowager baroness d'Oberkirch, *née* baroness de Buch. I was received in great form. A superb suite of apartments had been prepared for me, the elegance and comfort of which did credit to my husband's taste. I must not forget to speak of wondrous hangings which were displayed there. These were of India manufacture,

richly embroidered, and had once belonged to the grandmother of M. d'Oberkirch. Spite of my grief at leaving my father, I soon became accustomed to my new mode of life; my husband spared no care or attention on his part that could render it agreeable. We afterwards made visits with my mother-in-law to all the neighbouring nobility, who hastened in return to offer their congratulations, and during three days our hôtel was not a moment without visitors.

Scarcely was I married when I received another letter from M. Lavater; he had understood my silence, and changed his style:—

"Honourable Friend" (it was so he wrote),

"An Italian abbé, the count Velo de Vicence, who has resided some time at Zurich, and whose conduct and character are unexceptionable, intends to make some stay at Strasburg, where, in order to arrange his affairs, he is most anxious to obtain an audience of the cardinal-archbishop of Strasburg. I do not know any person at Strasburg to whom I could apply to help him to attain this object except you, the most noble, the best of women and patronesses. These lines will not be unprofitable if they serve me as well as those with which I took the liberty of asking as respectfully, and so earnestly, your *silhouette*. I do not

know whether you are accustomed to so much frankness; but I know, if your portrait does not deceive, that you will deign to tolerate my letters, such as they are. I expect a line to assure me that I have not erred in my opinion.

"JOHN GASPARD LAVATER.

"Zurich, 11th May 1776."

M. d'Oberkirch saw this letter, and insisted upon my sending my miniature to M. Lavater, to know what he would say of my disposition. I had not shown the former odd letter to my husband; however, after fresh importunities I decided to obey him. Here is M. Lavater's answer:—

"I thank you respectfully for your *silhouette*, for which I cannot really say much. I do not at first sight tell any one what I think of his portrait, whether good or ill, unless that I am under an imperious obligation to do so. I see noble things in your *silhouette;* but I must confess (hoping that you can endure the truth), that the lower part of your face, thanks, perhaps, to the artist, is far from being as promising as it appears in the painted portrait. I would venture to say that the *silhouette* has suffered in the cutting; a hair's breadth would spoil all.

"I am very grateful for what you have done for

M. Velo. I ought to thank you more, and apologize for my indiscretion, but I shall not do so; the expression of your countenance assures me that you set little value on mere words.

"May I one day have the happiness of assuring you, *de vive voix*, how much I honour you, and how highly I estimate the good fortune of the man who has the happiness of calling you his wife?

"JOHN GASPARD LAVATER,

"*Pastor.*

"Zurich, 14th June, 1776."

I had introduced his abbé to the prince de Rohan, bishop of Strasburg, *from father to son*, as Mdlle. Schneider, my *femme-de-chambre*, once said. He was very courteous to us, though we were not of his flock. The letters of M. Lavater are not *spirituelle*, but in transcribing them at full length I was anxious to show that a man may be endowed with a particular talent without possessing the charm of style. I never learned anything further about my *silhouette* and my portrait. M. d'Oberkirch would have it that he had nothing good to tell, and that he did not wish to say anything bad to my *face;* that was his expression. It is worthy of remark, that all the time of this correspondence, M. Lavater and I had never seen each other.

I was about to become a mother. I hastened to communicate this intelligence to my dear princess, who, in return, wrote, praying me, if my health would permit it, to come to her as she was immediately to leave Etupes for Berlin, where she would probably remain for a long time. She would tell me the rest *de vive voix.*

"Ah," cried I, "the Princess Dorothea is going to be married, and we shall never see her again. I am glad in one sense, but I will long bewail her loss."

M. d'Oberkirch gave me permission to go for a few days, but I was to use the greatest precautions. It was decided that he should not accompany me, as the moment in which the whole family were in a state of excitement by the announcement of an important piece of intelligence, would not be the most suitable to a presentation. This separation was painful to both, and my friend must have been very dear indeed, when I could make so great a sacrifice for her. I found the whole court of Montbéliard in agitation: a marriage had been unexpectedly proposed—a marriage which certainly offered the highest rank in Europe, next that of queen of France. The suitor was no less a personage than the Grand-duke Paul, heir to the throne of Russia. The entire event arose from the following circumstance:—

Prince Frederick of Prussia, brother to Frederick

the Great, and uncle to the duchess of Wurtemberg-Montbéliard, had been sent in 1770 by the king, his illustrious brother, to Russia, to the court of Catherine II., to negotiate the affairs of Poland, and to try to prevent a war between Prussia, Austria, and Russia. The success of this negotiation was complete. The state of anarchy in which Poland was then plunged had excited the cupidity of Russia and Austria. Prince Henry, not being able to oppose the designs of the other courts, succeeded in obtaining a share of the booty for Prussia, in order to preserve the balance of power. He arranged the conditions for the partition of this unfortunate country, and Frederic said to him on his return :—

" A god must have inspired you, my dear brother ! you have acted admirably."

The prince acquired an extraordinary influence over the Empress Catherine, and conceived the project of cementing the alliance between the two crowns by the marriage of the Grand-duke Paul with the Princess Dorothea of Wurtemberg-Montbéliard, grandniece to the great Frederick. The grand-duchess, first wife of the Grand-duke Paul, princess of Hesse-Darmstadt, died this year (1776), whilst Prince Henry was at St. Petersburg. As she left no children, the czarina was anxious that her son should marry soon again. She happened

to speak of this to Prince Henry, who immediately proposed the Princess Dorothea. Catherine was pleased with the idea. The affair proceeded quickly; it was agreed that the Grand-duke Paul Petrowitz should set out for Berlin accompanied by Prince Henry. It was arranged that the marriage should take place in the Prussian capital, in order that the prince might receive his bride from the hands of the great Frederick. Prince Henry made what may be considered a triumphal entry into Berlin, the alliance which he had negotiated being the assured pledge of peace.

Things were in this state when I arrived at Etupes. The princess was about to set off with her august father. She was in high delight. As soon as she saw me, she flung her arms about my neck and kissed me several times.

"Lanele!" cried she, "I am very sorry to leave you all, but I am the happiest princess in the world. You must come to see me."

For my part, I wept, and the tears of the duchess flowed with mine. The splendour of the alliance did not hide from her the sorrows of separation.

"And besides," said she, "terrible misfortunes sometimes befal the czars; and who knows what fate heaven has decreed for my poor child!"

Happily she was mistaken; her maternal instinct was here at fault.

Our days and our evenings passed in conjectures and in projects. We could not sleep. The Princess Dorothea mimicked court ceremonies, which made us laugh in spite of ourselves. She saluted all the empty fauteuils, to practise, as she said, being gracious, taking care, however, that none should receive more or less than its due share of royal condescension. Sometimes she stopped suddenly in the midst of her sport, and said, turning to me,

"I am very much afraid of Catherine; she will terrify me, I am sure, and I will appear to her a great fool. Oh! if I could only succeed in pleasing her and the grand-duke."

The Princess Dorothea, born in 1759, was then seventeen years of age. She was beautiful as Aurora; of that majestic stature which sculptors love to imitate, combining with a delicate regularity of features the most noble and imposing grace. Hers was indeed a regal beauty. She took an infantine pleasure in talking of her marriage. However, during the last days of her stay amongst us, the shades of sorrow began to gather round her when she reflected that she was about to leave her mother; to quit the country where she had been brought up; this castle, where she had been so happy; her brothers, me, all, even the people of the country about were included in her regret. At the moment of departure it was necessary almost

to tear her from our arms; she was borne, fainting, to her carriage, where she was received by her father and two waiting-women. I had promised to remain with the duchess during the first moments of her sorrow, and I wrote to M. d'Oberkirch, praying him to join me, which he did not delay a moment to do. He made a most favourable impression at Etupes, particularly on the duchess, who frequently said to me,

"I would only ask of heaven to see my daughter as happily married as you."

How sad and dreary did this palace and these gardens now appear to me, where I no longer found my tender and illustrious friend! I walked about all day with her poor mother, seeking sorrowfully her favourite spots, where we lingered and spoke of the dear absent one. Her praise was for us an inexhaustible theme. She wrote every day to the duchess, always adding a few words for me, but she had promised to give me an account of the interview which was to take place on the 26th July. She kept her word. Here is her letter:—

"Berlin, 26th July 1776.

"My very dearest Friend,

"I am satisfied, and more than satisfied. My dear friend, I could not possibly be more so. The grand-duke is exceedingly amiable: he possesses

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every charm. He arrived on the 21st, and on the 25th Prince Henry demanded a formal interview. I got precedence of all the princesses and royal duchesses. I dare flatter myself that I will be loved by my dear betrothed, a thought which renders me very, very happy. I cannot tell you more at present, for the courier that my beloved papa is sending to Stuttgard sets off this moment, so I must give him this letter, that he may put it in the post at Cassel. Adieu, *chère amie*, I am in heart and soul your tender and faithful friend,

"DOROTHEA."

State reasons are often very severe, and one needs a great deal of courage to submit to them with a good grace. The Princess Dorothea, on marrying the grand-duke, was obliged to embrace the Greek religion, and was rebaptized as Marie Fœderowna, as every one knows. She must have felt this very deeply; she who was so attached to our holy religion, and so sincerely devoted to her duty. I bewailed this circumstance in the depth of my soul; but it was of unavoidable necessity, and God will, I hope, call her to the truth before the close of her life, spite of her left-handed sign of the cross and her worship of images.

The nuptials were celebrated with the greatest magnificence, and formed the universal theme of

conversation throughout Europe. The newspapers were filled with details of all kinds, which we extracted. The affectionate heart of the princess could not perfectly enjoy her happiness far from her dear mother, whom she prayed so earnestly to come, that at length the duchess set out, accompanied by some ladies of her court. I would certainly have gone with her, had not the delicacy of my health prevented the possibility of undertaking so long a journey, nor would M. d'Oberkirch listen to such a proposition—to risk the safety of his heir! My dear princess did not forget me, and in the midst of the embarrassments of etiquette and of visits, wrote me these few lines from Marienwerder, 18th August 1776:—

"My dear and charming Lanele, I have only two minutes to myself—I will bestow them upon you, to let you know that we arrived here happily, that we are well, and that we all love you very much, particularly I, who am ever your tender and faithful friend,

"DOROTHEA, P. DE M. W.

"How is your health, my dear friend? tell me all about it in your next letter. Papa, and mamma, and all the ladies send you a thousand compliments."

The marriage took place on the 7th (13th) October the same year. The princess became thus grand-duchess of Russia and reigning duchess of Schleswig-Holstein; the Czar Peter III. having been duke of Holstein-Gottorp, and his son having inherited this duchy.

Whilst yet in the first flush of her joy, the grand-duchess set out for St. Petersburg with her husband. She was as happy as it is possible to be on this earth; nothing was wanting to complete her felicity, for she possessed the power of doing good. And she did good—a great deal of good—and was not less beloved in the new country to which she went than she had been at Montbéliard. Ever kind, she did not forget our friendship. I received from her a charming epistle, dated 16th (27th) December 1776, St. Petersburg:—

"My very good, very dear, and very tender Friend,

"I have just this instant received your letter, dated Strasburg, my angel, and I hasten to reply, though I have only a couple of minutes to myself. Knowing the friendship and attachment that you bear my dear parents, I am convinced of the sorrow you must have felt at parting from them. Still, spite of that, you are happier than I, for, after your confinement, I hope that you will

return to them; but I, unfortunately, can never look forward to a like happiness. Whenever this thought passes my mind I become sad and melancholy for the rest of the day. But, laying this topic aside, let us talk of yourself, my dear friend. Thank heaven, that notwithstanding the state you are in, you enjoy good health. I offer a thousand and a thousand prayers that you may get happily through this approaching sickness, and that my dear friend may be soon out of danger. As during the time of your illness, my dear angel, you dare not write yourself, pray let me hear of you through one of your friends. Provided that I know how you are, and how all is going on, I will be satisfied. Your dear portrait is placed in one of my rooms, but I do not think it a good likeness; I pray you, as a favour, to get me a better. You should long since have had mine, were it not that of five that were painted only one was tolerable. This I sent to my brother Eugene; but I am about to sit to another painter, who, I hope, will succeed better, and then I will send it to you. The tea shall not be forgotten. I hope that by this time you have received the heart, with my initials, which I ventured to send you. Adieu, my dear love, I embrace you a thousand times. If my little godson or my little god-daughter is born, give it a kiss in the name of its godmother. I am, ever

dear and beloved *amie*, your tender faithful friend,'

" MARIE,

" Grand-duchess of Russia,

" *née* Princess of Wurtemberg.

" P.S. The grand-duke, who is the most adorable of husbands, sends you his compliments. I am very glad that you do not know him, for you could not help adoring and loving him, and I should then be jealous. This dear husband is an angel, and I love him to distraction."

The princess of Montbéliard had taken leave of her daughter immediately after her marriage; I returned to Montbéliard to receive and console her in the first moments of loneliness. As it was expected that the birth of my child would soon occur, M. d'Oberkirch wished that I would return to Strasburg at the end of November.

The Duke Frederick Eugene, who had conducted the Princess Dorothea as far as Memel, returned on the 18th October. He related a thousand charming traits of our dear absent one: how one morning she saw from her window a holly-tree covered with its red fruit. She began to cry, thinking of one evening at Etupes when she and I had worn holly-berries in our hair. There was that

day a grand reception; she sent for some holly, and ordered a coiffure like to that which we had both worn, and when in the midst of all her courtiers she said to her father—

"Now, sir, do you not think me very handsome? Do not forget to tell my dear Lanele, that I have worn holly in memory of our friendship, and of the beautiful bouquets that she and I made together."

I was moved even to tears at this anecdote: it is in little things that love reveals itself.

On my return to Strasburg, I found there an agreeable surprise. M. Wieland, to whom M. Göthe had spoken of me, sent me some numbers of a journal in which he used to write very striking articles. Formerly a very distinguished professor at the university of Erfurt, he had some time since taken up his abode at Weimar, in order to superintend the education of the young prince. He was scarcely forty years of age, and the refinement and elegance which were the distinguishing characteristics of his genius seemed to increase every day. I wrote him a polite letter, with which, as it appears, he was pleased. Here is his reply:—

"Weimar, 12th September 1776.

"The extreme kindness with which *your grace* has deigned to assure me that you were not

offended at the liberty that I had taken in sending you some numbers of the 'German Mercury,' gives me an opportunity of assuring your grace that I cannot find terms adequate to expressing my gratitude. How much, madam, do I envy my friend the privilege of knowing you personally, and of being known to you! Should I ever enjoy this rare happiness, I may then perhaps hope that your grace will deign to accord to the man the esteem that through generosity, and not through justice, you grant to the author. Permit me, honoured madam, to say with grateful respect that I am your grace's

"Obedient servant and subject,

"WIELAND."

I have always admired persons of genius; and had I possessed a larger fortune, I would have willingly played the part of Mæcenas. I have, however, as far as was in my power, sought out persons of talent, as will be seen in the course of these memoirs.

CHAPTER V.

Birth of my daughter—Her illustrious godfathers and godmothers — Disappointment of M. d'Oberkirch — Letter from the grand-duchess of Russia — Another letter from her—The Emperor Joseph II. at Stuttgard—Jest of Duke Charles—Naïveté of the marshal of the Court—Fief of Falkenstein—The postillion prince—Joseph II. at Strasburg—M. de Vogué—Description of the emperor — His dress — Market-woman—Verses—Disappointment of Voltaire—The executioner of Colmar—Gag—Execution—Mademoiselle Heizelberg, a singer—Birth of Alexander Paulowitz.

1777.—On Thursday, the 23rd of January, between three and four in the morning, my daughter was born. She was baptized on the Saturday following in the new church, where she received the names of Mary Philippina Frederica Dorothea Frances. Her illustrious godmothers and godfathers were—

1. H.I.H. the august Princess Mary Fœderowna, by marriage grand-duchess of Russia, reigning duchess of Schleswig-Holstein, *née* duchess of Wurtemberg-Stuttgard, represented by the baroness of Palen, *née* Durckheim.

2. H.R.H. the Princess Philippina Augusta

Amelia, wife of the reigning landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, *née* marchioness of Brandenburg-Schwadt, represented by the Baroness Hahn, *née* Lieven.

3. His highness Frederick Eugene, duke of Wurtemberg-Stuttgard, lieutenant-general of the Prussian royal cavalry, and general of cavalry in the circle of Suabia, and his wife, *née* margravine of Brandenburg-Schwadt, represented by my father Baron Waldner, and by the dowager baroness of Bernhold, *née* de Wurmser Vendenheim.

The godfathers and godmothers present were—

Baron Dagobert of Wurmser Vendenheim, grand huntsman to the comté of Montbéliard.

The Baron Frederick Wurmser, colonel of infantry (afterwards made brigadier in 1780).

Baron Berekheim, Lebaheim, Schoppenwyr, and the dowager Baroness d'Oberkirch, *née* Baroness Buch.

M. d'Oberkirch was greatly disappointed by the birth of this daughter, having been extremely anxious to have a son. He took so little care to conceal his feelings on this subject during the first days of my illness, that I became very unhappy, and could not prevent myself from weeping constantly, though I feared that it would be bad for my health. As for me, I loved my child because it was mine; it was the instinct of a mother. However, to wish for a son was very na-

tural in M. d'Oberkirch, as the possessions of Oberkirch were a male fief, and would, in failure of heirs-male in the elder branch, descend to the second brother and his children. He never became reconciled to his disappointment; and if, when he was not in very good humour, any person spoke to him of his child, he would say, "I have no child, I have only a daughter." My daughter Mary heard him repeat this one day, and did not appear much flattered by such a proof of paternal affection.

In some days after the birth of the child, when he had recovered from the first shock, and his discontent a little abated, he behaved with more politeness. One day he came into my room just as the nurse had brought in the baby. I was lying on a sofa very much fatigued from receiving visits, and having kissed Mary, I said that I would go to sleep. As M. d'Oberkirch approached our child, I fancied that she smiled (if she did it was at the angels); but to my imagination it was a proof of an intelligence which it would have been impossible for her to have possessed so young.

"Mademoiselle d'Oberkirch is a pretty baby," said my husband, looking at her.

"You have discovered that at last," said I, a little piqued; "and do you think that a great boy would be half so charming as this lovely little girl?"

He sighed, but took the hand of his daughter, and, after holding it for some moments, kissed it.

"You will love her yet," said I, "and you will forgive the disappointment she has caused you; besides, I promise you that I will bring her up so that no young lady shall excel her." He said nothing, but made a sign to the nurse to retire, and, coming over to me, said as he drew me towards him, "Will you forgive my ill-humour and unkindness?"

We remained talking for a quarter of an hour in the most confiding and affectionate manner. I felt convinced that he would conquer his regret, and I went to sleep, feeling more tranquil than I had done for some time.

My dear princess wrote me the following affectionate letter on this occasion:—

"1777.—My most charming and amiable friend, your two letters have caused me the greatest joy. Imagine what pleasure could equal mine when I read that, thanks to the divine and adorable Providence, your child was born, and that you and your charming baby were both well. I was deeply moved by your thoughtfulness, my dearest love, in writing yourself, and I will keep for ever the charming letter, which is so strong a proof of your love for me Embrace my god-daughter for me. I feel

an affection for her already that it would be impossible to express to you. Yes, my dear friend, I can say with truth that I love you as a sister; no one could feel more affection for a friend than I feel for you. I beg of you to send me your likeness in miniature, that I may wear it with my watch, and never be separated from it. I will send you mine in a fortnight. My husband desires me to send you his compliments and congratulations. To amuse you, my love, I must tell you of a constant jest of the grand-duke. He hears me speak so much and so often of my dear friend Oberkirch, that to vary it a little, he calls you Zuckerbäcker, and every post-day asks me if I have heard from Madame Zuckerbäcker. I wish you knew this adorable husband of mine; he is an angel; he is the pearl of husbands; and I am, thank God, perfectly happy. I tell you this constantly, but I feel that your affection will never weary of hearing of my happiness. But you are ill, and cannot bear much fatigue, I must, therefore, however unwilling, finish my letter, and believe me when I say that nothing shall ever lessen my affection for you.

"Your affectionate and faithful friend,

(Signed) "MARY OF RUSSIA,

"*née* de Wurtemberg."

How ungrateful it would be of me, if I did not

repay with respect and tenderness the affection with which this illustrious princess honoured me. She wrote to me constantly during my convalescence, and always with the same tender solicitude. I will transcribe here another of her charming letters :—

"Czarskomscho, 28th April '78 (8th May.)

"My dear and beloved Friend,

"I will not complain of your indolence in consideration of your being still somewhat of an invalid ; but think, my dear Lanele, that I have not heard from you for a fortnight, and how wretched it must make me who love you as a sister. I beg of you, my dearest friend, to write to me soon, very soon ; and tell me again that you love me, that you have not forgotten me, that I am and shall ever be the chosen friend of your heart ; write me this, dear Lanele, and I will be content. The grand-duke sends you his compliments, and desires me to tell you that we wish to purchase the picture of Sieur Michel, by Paul Veronese, as a present for the empress. The price asked is three hundred French louisd'ors. M. de Mechilen may send it by either land or water, as he pleases, we, of course, paying all expenses ; but he must guarantee its safe arrival here. When, my love, shall I send you a coloured

drawing of this picture? I believe that I must send it by post. And also, my dear friend, tell me how much will be the subscription to the great undertaking of M. Mechilen, who is making reduced drawings of the paintings of the Dusseldorf gallery, and which, if I do not mistake, will be coloured like the one you sent to me. Many persons here are anxious to subscribe. Here are a number of commissions! Must I not have great confidence in the friendship of my dear Lanele, when I think of giving her so much trouble? How is my charming little goddaughter? How much pleasure it would give me to see mother and daughter, both of whom I love so much. When shall I get your portrait? I am quite impatient until I see it. You will receive mine in a few days, and I hope that it will recal to your remembrance one who will not feel perfectly happy until she can give you an evident proof of how much she is, and ever will be,

"Your affectionate and constant friend,

(Signed) "MARY OF RUSSIA,

"*née* de Wurtemberg."

"P.S. I kiss the dust of Madame Hendel's shoes. How is Mademoiselle Schneider? Always direct my letters to St. Petersburg, even though I should be at Czarskomscho."

I never lost an opportunity of recommending artists to the good graces of the grand-duchess, who had a great admiration for the fine arts, nor did I ever hesitate to present petitions in favour of the unfortunate, which the goodness of her heart seldom allowed her to refuse. Nor was I forgotten at Stuttgard; I received many touching proofs of the interest which its princes felt for me, although they were at that time so much occupied by a visit of the Emperor Joseph II. He was travelling under the name of Count Falkenstein (Falkenstein is a seigniory accorded by the treaty of Ryswick to the duke of Lorraine, grandfather of the emperor, together with Monema, Lixen, and Commercy). The duke of Wurtemberg wrote to the emperor, offering him the use of his palace during his stay at Stuttgard, but his imperial majesty declined, saying that he would prefer going to a hôtel.

This suggested a very happy stratagem to the duke, one in every way worthy of his refined and king-like character. He ordered all the hôtel-keepers of the city to remove their signs, and placed over the door of his palace an enormous board, emblazoned with the Austrian arms, and having these words beneath—

"THE EMPEROR'S HOTEL."

Joseph yielded to the touching ingenuity of

Duke Charles, and entering into the spirit of the jest, alighted at the palace as if it were a hotel. (He was on his way to France to visit his sister the queen, to see Paris, &c.) The duke received him dressed as a hôtel-keeper, and played his part extremely well. Everybody at the court, no matter of what rank, supported some character or other suitable to the occasion. The emperor was delighted. The following day they all laid aside their masquerading dresses, and the festivities commenced in reality. The presentation of the ladies of the court gave occasion to a very amusing occurrence.

Madame de * * * * (I cannot remember the name) entered the drawing-room as the marshal of the court was assigning to each lady the place to which her rank entitled her. The marshal, not knowing this lady, who was French, approached her, saying,

"What is your quality?"

Madame de * * * * was surprised, not understanding why she was asked such a question; but she laughed and said,

"Acariâtre" (sour).

"Acariâtre?" repeated the marshal, who did not know the meaning of the word: "I do not know what rank that is, but it is of no consequence. Sit with the countesses."

The emperor laughed a great deal when he heard this anecdote, and amused himself by frequently asking the ladies near him, "Which of you ladies would wish to receive the rank of *Acariâtre ?*"

The countesses were greatly annoyed, and the poor marshal had to bear a great many reproaches for the classification he had made.

The seigniory of Falkenstein, from which the emperor had derived his travelling title, is a fief near the comté of Bitche, situated between Lorraine and Alsace. At the cession of Lorraine to France in 1735, Francis I., at that time grand-duke of Tuscany, retained this fief, in order that he might remain a member of the Germanic body. It formerly belonged to Gerald of Alsace, first duke of Lorraine, in 1060. The emperor proved his good taste in assuming this name; it ought to be for him a prognostic of happiness.

He had left Vienna the 1st of April 1777, and arrived at Stuttgard without much delay. His reception, there, as we have seen, was very amusing; his departure was scarcely less so. When the emperor's carriage was brought to the door of the palace, one of the horses was mounted by a postilion in a very shabby surtout, and boots covered with mud. The emperor was attracted by his strange appearance, and laughingly remarked,

"Most certainly that man is not a courtier, or

he would have put on his holiday suit. He must be a drunkard; we shall give him something to drink our health."

The postilion showed great agility and address in his management of the horses. Joseph II. was delighted, and said several times—

"I wish I had a fellow like that in my stables."

When they stopped to change horses, the emperor, wishing to keep his promise, and to reward the person who had amused him so much, asked for the postilion, when he was told that he was the prince of * * *, and that they were his horses that had drawn his majesty's carriage. His imperial majesty thought it an excellent joke, and was profuse in his thanks to the prince, who had transformed himself into a courier for his convenience.

"The imitation was perfect, monsieur," said he; "however, I think I would have detected you if I had looked closer; besides, you did not swear enough."

I had the honour of having a closer view of the emperor on another occasion, as I will relate hereafter. This time I only got a glimpse of him at the theatre; I say a glimpse, for under such circumstances one cannot see distinctly. His imperial majesty passed some days at Strasburg, where, on the evening of his arrival he went incognito

to see a comedy. He was recognised as he sat in a corner of an upper box, when the public enthusiasm immediately manifested itself in thundering acclamations. The marquis of Vogné hastened to invite the emperor to enter his box, where his appearance gave occasion to fresh bursts of applause. The next day, 10th of August, he reviewed the troops on the Place d'Armes. He afterwards visited the hospitals, the arsenal, the fortifications, the cathedral, and the tomb of Marshal Saxe. He was received everywhere with delight as the brother of our *beloved* queen. *She was beloved then!* On the 11th he came again to the theatre, where all the nobility appeared in compliment to him; I amongst others had taken a box for the occasion. I saw there the marquis of Voyer, lieutenant-general, commander of Alsace; M. de St. Victor, lieutenant of the king at Strasburg; the chevalier of St. Mars, commander of the artillery regiment of Strasburg; and many other distinguished persons that I cannot remember now. The entertainments consisted of some necromantic tricks, and the 'Barber of Seville'—that corner-stone of the edifice reared against the nobility by Beaumarchais. We all applauded the satire pointed against ourselves; we all approved and blessed the weapons that were afterwards to wound us. I will speak more at large upon this

subject when I come to notice the 'Marriage of Figaro;' but I must say that I never could comprehend the conduct of the nobility at that time.

This is the first time that I speak of the emperor, but we will return to him again. He was a strange prince, and perhaps little suited for the time in which he lived. He wished to combine the past and the future, and failed signally in his object. He was an enemy to pomp (though a certain degree of magnificence is not a fault in a sovereign), and always slept on a mattress with the skin of a stag for a coverlet. He was very easy of access, and always wished to hear the truth without disguise or circumlocution; besides which he was gifted with a surprising penetration.

His usual dress was the uniform of one of his regiments—green, with red facings, vest and culotte of chamois leather. He sometimes wore only a plain cloth coat. I was told in Paris, that a fish-woman once, in presenting him with a bouquet, said to him very philosophically,—

"The *people* who have to pay for the lace on your coats ought to be very happy, M. Count."

Most certainly this woman must have read Rousseau and the entire 'Encyclopædia.' However, it is my opinion that the people of Paris would find themselves nicely taken in if the court resolved to wear dresses without lace or embroidery. Deprive

France, and especially the capital, of its luxury, and you will deprive it of a large portion of its commercial wealth. I will even go further, and say that you will deprive it of a great portion of its influence in Europe. For I ask, if the fashions did not come from Paris, where could they come from?

When the emperor arrived at Paris, he was overwhelmed with addresses, verses, dedications, petitions, and every imaginable kind of truth and flattery. Here is an impromptu composed by the Abbé Delaney on the occasion:—

> Say who is he, in whose mild and courteous mien
> By ev'ry eye a great one bending low is seen?
> With time and gold thus ever well employed, he
> Reveals his rank, but ne'er demeans his dignity.

I do not like these verses: in my opinion they contain a contradiction. "*A great one bending low*" does not please me, because he then "*demeans his dignity.*" I am only a German, but all this does not appear to me very correct.

Here are more verses:—

CORTEGE OF THE EMPEROR.

> Before his steps Benevolence moves on,
> Beside him modest Virtue holds her place;
> Close on her steps Humanity is seen,
> Bright Immortality the close does grace.

All this is very philosophic for a German emperor.

They talk a great deal of his answer to a nobleman, who one day remarked to him that he mingled too much with the people in the public streets :—

"If I would only mix with my equals," said he, "I should shut myself up with my ancestors in the Capuchin convent where their ashes repose."

Such reasoning appears to me more specious than profound. The living are a study worthy even of an emperor, and vast is the field of research opened to the philosophic mind in the different phases of human life between the throne and the grave.

The count of Falkenstein left Paris on the 31st of May 1777. He visited in succession Rouen, Dieppe, Hâvre, Caen, St. Malo, Brest, Saumur, Nantes, Tours, Rochelle, Bordeaux, Fontarabia, St. Jean de Luz, St. Sebastian, Bayonne, Toulouse, Beziers, Montpellier, Marseilles, Toulon, and Lyons. He met in the last city the count of Oland (duke of Ostrogoth), brother of the king of Sweden. It is said that little sympathy existed between these two princes.

On the 12th of July he left Lyons for Vienna, passing through Switzerland and Fribourg, in Brisgau. At Geneva he received a visit from M. Saussure, professor of natural philosophy, who made many electrical experiments before him, and then set out for Basle.

M. Voltaire did not think that the royal philosopher would have passed so near his retreat without paying him a visit; but Voltaire did not know Joseph II. He thought he resembled himself in this love for honours and observance of etiquette, and made immense preparations for this expected visit, wishing apparently to express in another form his celebrated inscription on the village church—"Voltaire to God." Perhaps this time he wished to say—"Voltaire to the Emperor," in order to put on the same footing with respect to him, the powers of heaven and earth. Joseph smelled this academic *séance* and passed on, although his carriage almost touched the terrace of the château. The postilions, who had been bribed, repeated at every crack of the whip—

"That is the château of Ferney—there is M. Voltaire." The count of Falkenstein would not hear, and only looked to the other side. M. de Voltaire was in despair, and put a thousand stories in circulation to console his self-love. He said that his majesty had been very much annoyed by a Genevese officer, who had the indiscreet curiosity to follow his carriage on horseback for four leagues, and nothing that the emperor could do would induce him to retire.

The emperor arrived at Schönbrunn on the 1st of August, and in a little time after began to make

preparations for a second journey. A short while after his imperial majesty had passed through Colmar, a mysterious occurrence took place in that town which threw all Alsace into a ferment.

On the 7th of May 1777 the public executioner of Colmar was imprisoned for having left the town without the permission of the authorities; he was several times brought up for examination before the magistrates, and here is the account that he gave of his absence:—He said that one evening at the end of April he was alone in his house (his wife and assistants being out), occupied in some duty of his office, such as repairing handcuffs, or putting a gibbet together, when he heard a loud knock at the door. He opened without hesitation (an executioner could scarcely be timid!), expecting some messenger from the magistrates; no other person ever visiting his condemned dwelling. Instead of the familiar form that he expected, he saw before him three men enveloped in cloaks, whilst a carriage slowly advanced surrounded by six or seven others. The executioner saw all this at a glance, he was astonished but not frightened.

"You are the public executioner?" said one of the strangers.

"Yes, monsieur."

"Are you alone? We wish to speak to you in private."

"I am quite alone; will you walk in, gentlemen?"

He thought that they were messengers from some neighbouring tribunal, and drew back to let them enter the house. But he had scarcely finished speaking, when these men sprang on him, gagged him, bound him hand and foot, so that he could not move a single limb, and placed him in the carriage. The three men whom he had seen first got in also, whilst the others mounted their horses and all set off at full speed. They preserved the most profound silence whilst they were passing through the town, but as soon as the smoothness of the way would allow their voices to be heard, the man who had first addressed him touched the arm of the executioner and said—

"Listen to me; you have nothing to fear, you will receive no hurt. You are only required to perform an act of justice; and we will answer for your safety, provided that you do not attempt to escape, or try to penetrate a mystery with which it is not necessary that you should be fully acquainted. No question of yours will be answered; everything that you require will be given to you; and when your task will be accomplished you shall be brought back to your home, and will get two hundred louis as a compensation for your trouble."

The executioner breathed more freely after he

was told that his life would be spared, though he still suffered extremely, not being able to move his limbs.

"I am going to remove the bonds and gag," said the same voice, "and you will no longer be subjected to any personal restraint, except a bandage which will be placed over your eyes during the day and removed at night; but this is only on condition that you are perfectly obedient, and do not speak. At the first cry you dare to utter you are a dead man."

He felt the muzzles of two pistols and the point of a poignard touch his breast, which easily convinced him he had no choice but to submit implicitly; and as soon as his mouth was free, and that he got permission to speak, he swore with a thousand oaths that he would obey them in all things, and would abide by the conditions they imposed on him.

"In that case," said the same person, "you have nothing to fear."

From this moment not a word was spoken. They often changed horses, but always in some very retired place, where they always appeared to be expected. Although the blinds of the carriage were firmly closed, his eyes were bandaged at the first appearance of day, and the same menaces repeated in case he should attempt to discover in

what part of the country he was. He was otherwise well treated; they gave him a share of their provisions and wine, which were both excellent. They sometimes alighted, but always in a forest, or some by-place where they would run little risk of being remarked by passers-by. This continued for two days: it appeared to the poor executioner that during this time they had crossed the Rhine, and ascended several mountains. On the evening of the second day, after they had been ascending a rising ground for some time, the carriage stopped. He heard a drawbridge descend, and he knew from the sound of the wheels that they crossed a deep moat. Although it was perfectly dark, the bandage was again placed upon his eyes; whilst they entered, as it appeared to him, into a large court-yard. The door of the carriage was opened, and two men, taking the executioner by the arms, led him up several steps. He heard around him sounds, as if several battle-axes or muskets were laid upon the ground.

"Come along," said a strange voice, for he had stopped, as if hesitating for a moment.

"Remember your promise," whispered his travelling companion, "and we will not forget ours."

It then seemed to him that he entered a large vestibule, then crossed several vast, dark rooms, which he was certain were all vaulted, and at last

he was led into a large saloon, where the bandage was taken from his eyes. The walls were all hung with black, and a few torches cast a dim sepulchral light over the apartment. Ten men, in magisterial robes, were seated at some distance from him, and though they were unmasked, the light was so faint that he could not distinguish their features. All the inferior actors in this drama stood around, with crape upon their faces.

Immediately after the executioner had entered this apparent hall of judgment, a door in the opposite wall was flung open, and two men appeared, leading a lady, whose face was concealed by a long veil. She was tall, slight, and evidently young; and wore a long and flowing dress of violet velvet. She was placed in the centre of this boding circle, where she stood erect, calm, and motionless, her hands folded and covered by the long and graceful sleeves of her dress. All were profoundly silent, and he who seemed of most authority amongst them rose, and addressing the executioner in German (which all the Alsatians understand), said—

"You have been brought here to inflict in secret the merited punishment of a secret crime. You will behead this woman, who, though unanswerable to a public tribunal, is stained with unpardonable guilt."

The executioner—all executioner as he was—was

an honest man. He would unhesitatingly put people to death by the orders of the magistrates of Colmar, and a mandate signed by them, sealed with the great corporate seal and the fleur-de-lis, reviewed by the king's commissioners, and registered in the records of the town; but this was quite another affair—nothing better than an assassination, for how could he know what right these men had to exercise the authority of legal judges when their very faces were a mystery to him? After a few moments' reflection, he summoned sufficient courage to say, with an unhesitating voice—

"I cannot obey you!"

All round he heard swords drawn from their scabbards, from which he suspected that these magistrates were not quite so pacific as would be suitable to their office. He looked at the lady; there she stood in the same position, apparently calm and undisturbed, as if these proceedings had no interest for her.

"You have promised obedience to our commands," said the voice of the man who had brought him; "and you will feel the weight of our vengeance if you do not keep your word."

"When I promised, it was under the impression that your proceedings would be legal, though secret. I am not an assassin; and, gentlemen, whoever you may be, I refuse to execute your

orders; I will not touch a hair of that woman's head. Besides, what crime has she committed?"

The president looked at his colleagues, as if to get their opinion; and then, rising quickly, said in a voice of thunder:

"You ask what crime this woman has committed! Listen, and you shall hear; and the horror of the tale will nerve your arm to inflict on her a punishment which is however unequal to her guilt. This woman——"

"Enough," said the lady, stretching forth her hand, "enough. You may deprive me of life; but you may not, you ought not, reveal to a man like that, the secret that your ears have heard. If I am guilty, punish me, I submit; and that is more than you have a right to expect."

This altercation was succeeded by a solemn deathlike silence, only interrupted by the monotonous ticking of a large clock covered by the gloomy hangings. Eleven struck.

"There is not a moment to be lost," said the president, "obey."

A large sharp sword was presented to him, like those used by executioners in Switzerland.

"No," said he, "no; put her to death yourself. You are an illegal judge, and you may as well be an illegal executioner."

During this the condemned did not stir.

"Listen," said the first speaker; "do you value your life?"

"Yes, for the sake of my wife and little daughter, whose sole support I am."

"Very good, decide then; if you have not beheaded this woman before the quarter strikes, I will send a bullet through your head."

"Why not kill her yourself? it would be as little crime as to kill me."

The judge trembled under his long robe; but, commanding himself, he said coldly—

"Decide."

The executioner had resisted with great firmness, but, courageous as he was, he at length began to feel afraid, but still resolved to preserve an undaunted air. Every stroke of the pendulum was agony to the poor man, who in a few minutes would be called upon to decide between guilt or death. A mournful silence reigned through the hall, not a finger stirred. The executioner began to pray; he besought the Virgin and all the saints to intercede for him (he was a Catholic). At the conclusion of his prayer, he cried out:

"Kill me if you will, I will not obey."

"You have ten minutes still," coolly replied the judge.

All was again silent; the pendulum alone was heard, with its inflexible vibrations measuring life

with equal impartiality to the happy and the wretched. And she, the unhappy subject of this tragedy, for whom, in a few minutes, eternity was to open, stood there immovable as a statue. Was it innocence or insensibility that thus steeled her human feelings, and enabled her to meet so calmly all the horrors of a violent death?

The quarter struck. At a signal from the president, two assistants advanced towards the executioner, and again presented the sword to him; he shook his head, and pushed it aside with his hand, but was unable to utter a word. The president cocked his pistol; the wretched man did not know what to do.

"My God!" thought he, "must I leave my wife a widow, and my child an orphan?"

Whether it was this thought that influenced him, or that his power of resistance sunk before the arm stretched out against his life, I know not, but he cried in a stifled voice—

"I consent—I consent!"

He took the sword, and, having tried its edge, stepped forward.

The lady remained standing.

"Will you not let her see a priest?" said he, stopping suddenly.

"Do you perform your office, and do not trouble yourself with anything else."

"The lady must be bound," said he.

"*I* bound!" she cried, in a disdainful tone.

"Bind that woman's hands," said the monotonous voice of the judge.

Two men advanced towards her; she drew herself up to her full height.

"You dare not!" said she.

These words seemed to deter the two servants, or the persons who had assumed their functions.

"I must be obeyed!" said the president.

She was immediately bound to a block, and her veil raised as far as the throat. She made no further resistance, but resumed her former immobility.

"Strike! or —" cried the judge, presenting a pistol charged to the very mouth.

The executioner, excited either by fear, or that intoxication which it is said sometimes influences people in time of imminent danger, raised the sword, and at one blow severed the head from the trunk; and then he, the man of iron nerves, who during twenty years had been shedding human blood, as the minister of human justice, sank fainting on the ground beside the victim he had sacrificed.

When he recovered his senses he found himself again in the carriage, his eyes bandaged, and a cloak wound round him to conceal his blood-stained garments.

When his companions perceived that he was recovered, one of them handed him a purse, saying,

"Here is your reward; it is double what you were promised, in consideration of your conscientious conduct."

Their journey back was performed with the same precautions as the former one, and at the end of the fourth day he was set free on the banks of the Ill, in a meadow near his house. He found his wife very anxious, and the magistrates furious.

All that I have written is copied almost exactly from his depositions, which we read in Strasburg, at the residence of the lieutenant-general, who gave me permission to transcribe them.

The magistrates of Colmar made every exertion to discover the persons concerned in this melancholy history; but in vain. Nothing more was ever heard.

I was in the habit of keeping a journal, in which I noticed important events, or any interesting circumstance which I desired to remember, and from its pages I often now refresh my memory. About this time I find that I was present at a concert given by a German singer, Mademoiselle Hizelberg, before she went to Paris. She is prima cantatrice of the prince bishop of Franconia. I know not what was thought of her elsewhere, but she excited little enthusiasm at Strasburg. There

were, however, a good many persons at her concert; and I remember very well that the most fashionable ladies present wore hats turned up with feathers à la Henri IV. I was in very good spirits, for I had heard that morning (20th December 1777) of the birth of Alexander Paulowitz, eldest son of my dear princess, and, that she, whom I loved so well, was in very good health.

1778.—From amongst the many letters I received from my illustrious friend, I will transcribe one here which shows how great an influence her affection exerted over her husband, and which induced him to participate in her friendship for me.

"Czarkosnello, 28th April 1778 (9th May).

"My best and dearest friend, Lanele,

"It would be impossible to describe to you how much pleasure your charming letter of the 15th April has given me, and how delighted and flattered I was to perceive that you still loved me, and that neither time nor absence had in the least diminished your affection. I embrace you a thousand times in gratitude for the sentiments you express for me, dear Lanele, and can sincerely assure you that I feel equal affection for you, 'und dass ich Lanele von ganzem Herzen liebe.'* You have not mentioned a letter of mine in which I

* And that I love Lanele with all my heart.

spoke of young M. Hahn, and I fear that it has been lost; and, therefore, I will again tell you what I have been able to do for him. The grand-duke offers to receive him into his own regiment, on condition that he accepts a lower grade than he holds at present. This is a custom in this country when a stranger enters the service. He will be supernumerary for some time, but the grand-duke promises, if he conducts himself well and likes the service, that he will insure his promotion."

(The following lines are written by H.I.H. the Grand-duke Paul.)

"Madam,

"The friendship that exists between you and my wife will be, I am sure, sufficient excuse for the liberty I take in addressing you; and I beg you to believe that I fully participate in her sentiments for you, of which I would be very happy to have an opportunity of giving you a more evident proof.

"I remain most affectionately yours,

(Signed) "PAUL."

The grand-duchess continues:—

"The grand-duke came unto my room, and asked me to whom I was writing. I replied, 'To Lanele.' 'To Lanele,' said he, and immediately

took away my pen and paper to write a few lines to you himself. I did not prevent him, knowing that it would give you pleasure, but waited patiently until he had finished, and that it was again my turn.

"Adieu, dear friend, write often to me, and always believe me your affectionate and faithful friend.

(Signed) "MARY."

From this it may be seen that I had again recommended a person to the princess. I never lost an opportunity of doing so, and very rarely was refused. The pleasure I received from these letters may be easily conceived. My respectful affection for this beloved princess was one of the most profound sentiments of my heart. I was just then recovered from a severe illness, and M. d'Oberkirch celebrated my convalescence by giving a large dinner party, at which were present, besides our own family, several persons of distinction, amongst others, M. d'Aumont, commander of the Genevese brigade, a man of intelligence and extensive information. He was a great favourite of ours, and we invited him constantly to our house. We had besides baron de Lort, maréchal-de-camp and lieutenant of the king at Strasburg; Baron Flachsland, nephew of the dowager Berekheim,

who had been appointed brigadier in the royal army the same day as my uncle, the commander de Waldner, whom he has since succeeded as colonel of the Bouillon regiment. There are two branches of the Flachsland family, one in Upper Alsace, though not reckoned amongst the nobility of that place; the other resides at Saverne in Lower Alsace, and are seigniors of Schaffhausen and of Markenheim. M. de Flachsland is in every way a distinguished man, to which his imposing air and military bearing are no slight addition. He very often dined with us.

Almost immediately after dinner we went to visit my uncle, who had just arrived from Landau, where his regiment of Waldner-Suisse was garrisoned. He had brought with him several officers —M. de Chateauvieux, lieutenant-colonel; M. de Wech, major; baron de Roll, Count Parivicini, Baron Thurn, captains; M. de Reizel, lieutenant and knight of St. Louis. He received a great deal of society at Ollwillon, where he lived in great style, keeping, as I may say, open house. His horses, carriages, in fact, everything about him, proclaimed the *Grand Seigneur*.

Every Sunday after parade, Prince Max de Deux Ponts, colonel of the Alsatian regiment, set out for Ollwillon, accompanied by several of his officers, and remained there until Monday. All the resident

nobility were invited to meet him, and the festivities were on a more than usually extensive scale. They had the reputation of playing very high on these occasions. Prince Max is very extravagant: the king, Louis XVI., has paid his debts, but he is constantly contracting new ones. He is what is called a *bon vivant*, delighting in hunting and the pleasures of the table; and scandal says, a frequenter of the society of the *filles d'opéra*. His manners, however, are dignified and elegant, equally suited for a court or a private drawing-room. He possesses a most amusing talent for relating ludicrous stories. The Monday we passed in his company he was in his happiest vein; he mimicked every celebrated person, actors, literary men, &c.; amongst others, M. de Voltaire, who was then only a few months dead. He knew every amusing anecdote, the histories of the most celebrated actresses, and the genealogies of their lovers, all which he related in a manner that would not wound the most fastidious ear.

The uniform of his regiment is very handsome; it is a blue coat, with collar, facings, and lining of red; the vest and culotte white, and a hat bound with silver. It became him extremely well. Prince Max was a much better man than he appeared to be, or even wished to be thought; I have heard many things of him very much to his honour. He

was very much attached to my brother Godfrey, who was aide-de-camp to my uncle, and never lost an opportunity of serving him.

My uncle had been sent a pamphlet which interested us all very much, and which was read aloud after the departure of Prince Max and his brilliant staff. It was entitled 'Dialogues on the Condition of Protestants in France.' It was a corollary to the proposition made in favour of our church in Parliament, and in which we felt a deep interest, although not personally concerned, as we Alsatians enjoyed special privileges, granted at the reunion of our province to France. M. Necker used all his interest, and employed the greatest zeal in favour of this measure, but had not the good fortune to succeed fully. Oh, my God! when will there be an end to these dissensions and quarrels, and everybody enjoy an absolute freedom of conscience?

CHAPTER VI.

The new Hôtel de Ville at Montbéliard—*Les Rêveries*—Count Wurmser in Austria—Ambassador to the Grand-duke of Russia—Letter of Paul Petrowitz—Adventure of the Baroness Hahn—Prince Louis de Rohan—Birth of Constantine Paulowitz—Madame Schack—Marriage of Prince Nassau Saarbruck—The comté of Saarbruck—Verses—M. de Dietrich—Rejoicings at the château of Reishoffen—The strange husband.

I HAD been long absent from Montbéliard; I now returned there with great pleasure. This illustrious family was become necessary to my happiness, I could not exist without them; besides the duchess now recalled me, that she might speak of her beloved child, that she might pour forth all the feelings of her heart without restraint, and who could sympathize with her as I? M. d'Oberkirch did not accompany me, he joined us at Montbéliard.

The first thing I was carried to see was the new Hôtel de Ville; it was built on the site of the former, which had been destroyed two years before. It cost more than eighty thousand francs, and did much honour to Mr. Laquepierre, under whose direction it had been erected. The magistrate had held a sitting there the evening before

for the first time. I saw with pleasure that the former windows of stained glass had been preserved, and filled the new frames. The arms of Montbéliard were emblazoned on them, and produced a very good effect in the halls.

When I arrived, her royal highness was at the *Rêveries*, charming pleasure-grounds which she had got laid out under her directions; they were situated on the route to Delle, at the entrance of the little wood of Sochaux. This road leads to Etupes and to Exincourt. The dukes of Montbéliard possess in their domains more than twenty thousand acres of forest, of which about six thousand are in the comté of Montbéliard, six thousand in the lordship of Blamont, Clémont, Châtelot, and d'Hericourt; five thousand in that of Horbourg and of Riquervir, two thousand at Clerval, Granges, and Passavant. It will be seen by this, that the princess had ample domains in which to choose a retreat; she selected this pretty little enclosure. The southern wall of the *Rêveries* is hidden by plantations, and by a row of poplars bordering the road. On the north it is bounded by a canal, of which the waters are supplied by the Allain and the Savoureuse. The grove is ornamented with statues and vases, whilst a thousand winding pathways, varied-tinted flowers, clear purling streams, and fresh green swards, allure the fancy and flatter the senses.

In the pavilion, which was only meant as a resting place, were two pretty cabinets and a drawing-room.

The princess was very fond of this place, and often went there. I determined to give her a surprise, for she did not expect me, and spite of much sage advice to the contrary, I set off on a fine sunny day in November. Her royal highness uttered a cry on recognising me, and ran towards me with open arms. Her first word was about her daughter. My sudden appearance made her fear that I was the bearer of some bad news. The grand-duchess of Russia was about to become a mother for the second time, and was filled with gloomy apprehensions. She had written to us all.

I found much difficulty in tranquillizing her mother. At length when she was quite certain that I came simply to see, and pass some time with her, she was good enough to testify a great deal of joy, and to thank me very sincerely.

"As a reward for your visit, dear Lanele, I will tell you a piece of good news. The Count Sigismond de Wurmser has been appointed lieutenant-general by the Emperor Joseph II."*

* Dagobert Sigismond, count de Wurmser, born in Alsace in 1724, died in 1797. He broke the lines of Wissembourg commanded by Custini in 1793, and fought against Buonaparte in Italy in 1796.

This was, indeed, very good news. I was anxious to communicate it to my father, who would be delighted. The count de Wurmser, our relative, had accompanied my father to Austria some years before. He had been in the service of France, where from his earliest youth he had been distinguished for his high courage. At first, captain of cavalry in the Royal Germans, afterwards lieutenant-colonel in the Royal Nassau, from the creation of this regiment in '56. He was wounded the following year at the battle of Rosbach. Brigadier and colonel of Soubise in '61, he was again wounded near Friedbergen in '62. In after years he raised a corps of hussars in his own name, with whom he passed into the service of the empress-queen. She bestowed on him, at his first entrance into her service, the office of chamberlain, and afterwards created him count of the holy empire and major-general. His generosity and goodness of heart made him adored by the soldiers, whilst the chivalrous bravery of his character added lustre to his name. He was deeply beloved in the family, and many a voice foretold that his name would be seen high inscribed in the temple of fame.

During two days this appointment formed the subject of our conversation, when it gave place to new ideas excited by the arrival of some music

ordered by me, and which I intended as a present for the grand-duke of Russia, who was passionately fond of the science of sweet sounds. We practised all the *ariettes* before packing them. Heaven only knows what a confusion of sounds was there! Each of the performers sang his appointed air, his royal highness stopped his ears, and we laughed heartily at the discord we had raised. The duchess looked very sad.

"That reminds me of my Dorothea, and the concerts in which you played together. Do you remember the *blind-man's buff* the day the prince-regnant arrived?"

We both sighed in thinking that these leaves of paper would meet the eyes of her whose absence we never ceased to deplore, whilst years might elapse before we should see her again; nay, that happiness may never be granted to us.

This music, as it appears, was an agreeable gift to his imperial highness. It was the occasion of my receiving the following charming epistle:—

"St. Petersburg, 3rd (14th) February 1779.

"Madam,

"I am very grateful for the music that you have been so kind as to send me. I have not yet had an opportunity of hearing it, but the deep conviction that I entertain of the taste of her who

selected it, is to me a sufficient assurance of its excellence. You indeed, madam, possess a title powerful enough to add a charm to anything, in my eyes; it is that of being the friend of her who constitutes all my happiness. Through the influence of this title you may be sure of always possessing a boundless influence over me. I am deeply annoyed, madam, to perceive that the adventure of the baron de Hahn has caused you vexation, or that you could for a moment suppose that his thoughtlessness could in any way be reflected on her who introduced him. If I have any reason to be vexed at this adventure, it is only on account of the annoyance it has caused you, and which you express in your letter. I have besides received a letter from M. de Hahn, in which he shows himself quite penitent. Let this matter be for ever forgotten, and permit me to subscribe myself

" Yours faithfully,

(Signed) " PAUL."

My protégé was the young baron de Hahn. I have already mentioned that the baroness de Hahn, *née* de Lieven, wife of baron de Hahn, colonel of cavalry, had been godmother to my daughter, as proxy for the landgravine of Hesse-Cassel. The young baron was major in the French service, and wished to enter into that of Russia.

I wrote to the grand-duchess: we have seen her answer. M. de Hahn would not accept the conditions, and by this refusal placed me in a most disagreeable position, though he ought to have known that they were according to the rules of the Russian service. He was universally blamed. I wrote to the grand-duke to make my apologies.

I passed the winter at Strasburg, and was there on the 11th March, at the installation of Prince Louis de Rohan, who succeeded the Cardinal Constantine, his uncle, whose coadjutor he had been. He was a very great nobleman, to whom, it was said, the domains of the bishoprick in France and Germany would be only a small gem in his pastoral ring. His chapter, consisting of twelve canons and twelve domiciliaries, went to receive him at the porch of his splendid cathedral. Born in the year 1734, he was still young, and appeared very handsome in his rich episcopal ornaments. I have often met, and will have occasion to speak of him again.

I returned in the spring to Montbéliard, to celebrate the birth of the Grand-duke Constantine Paulowitz, born on the 8th of May. His dear mother had been very ill, and we had suffered much on her account. Happily, our anxieties were now over, and we could live peaceably the remainder of the summer, which I passed almost entirely at Etupes. The absence of the Princess Marie

Fœderowna was deeply felt ; our gaiety was less buoyant, for the princesses her sisters were not so playful as she, and it must be admitted that the baroness de Boreck was a little less tormented. Still we sometimes amused ourselves slyly in watching the old system of signals carried on between her and her worthy husband. A person of a style entirely different from the baroness de Boreck had been lately added to the establishment. This was Mdlle. de Schack, one of the ladies of the duchess. She possessed talent and information, and was endowed with a degree of penetration and finesse worthy of a wider sphere of action. She saw and observed everything without uttering a word, for she seldom spoke. The baron de Maneler, tutor to the young princes, with whom I often conversed, did not like her on that account. It is not, however, by an extraordinary loquacity that one is most likely to succeed in the world.

A marriage took place in the October of this year, which was considered a legitimate subject of conversation for everybody. The prince of Nassau-Saarbruck married his son, who was only twelve, to Mademoiselle de Montbarrey, who was eighteen years of age. Everybody was astonished at this alliance ; not because he was Protestant and she Catholic, for mixed marriages were very common in that country, but because of the age of the

prince. The young princess was to return to her parents immediately after the ceremony, and to remain with them until her husband should be of age. Mademoiselle de Montbarrey is daughter to the ancient war-minister. The count de St. Germain had appointed him his assistant in this office, in which he succeeded him. As he was very clever, he profited largely by his position. He was created prince of the Holy Roman Empire, grandee of Spain, knight of the order, and grand baillie of Haguenau. His wife had been a great beauty. She had a most exquisite complexion, pearly teeth, a captivating smile, soft dovelike eyes, and caressing manners—all of which made her one of the most charming persons in the world. She has been accused of having had a too tender heart; but she was beloved, and has enjoyed with taste and grace the position of her husband.

This marriage of the prince de Nassau-Saarbruck with Mademoiselle de Montbarrey was a very grand affair. The comté de Saarbruck, as well as that of Saarwerden, was ceded to France with a number of dependent lands and lordships in 1681, by an article in the Treaty of Westphalia. To indemnify the count de Nassau-Saarbruck, the emperor, by letters patent, raised him, 4th of August 1688, to the rank of prince of the Holy Roman Empire.

The bridal pair received congratulations and compliments in every possible form. I have preserved a copy of some verses, addressed to the princess by a drawing-room poet, and which were read with great avidity during the bridal festivities.

I will transcribe them here:—

Far from your native land you go
The ties of childhood to efface,
A mother's tender cares forego
To meet a husband's rapt embrace.

Resigning thus so dear a prize,
What tears maternal grief shall speak!
Whilst he, possessor of your charms,
To love's enchanting bliss shall wake.

Still through our tears a smile shall break,
A smile of triumph when we say,
Within the sunny land of France
A thousand hearts shall own her sway.

A milder sceptre there you'll wield;
For we, who long your scorn have proved,
By envy touch'd, may whispering say,
A heart so proud could scarce be loved.

And thus triumphant you depart,
From ev'ry breast allegiance claim;
Your sway is potent o'er each heart,
Admired or lov'd you reign supreme.

These verses are very stupid; but I quote them because they amused us exceedingly, when we considered that this husband, "possessor of your charms," and who "to love's enchanting bliss shall

wake," was a child of twelve years of age, who wept from morning to night, frantic at being made an object of universal curiosity, flying from his wife, and even repulsing her with the rudeness of an ill-bred child, and having no desire to claim a title whose signification he did not understand.

Mademoiselle de Montbarrey belied her ordinary good taste in making a display of these verses. It would have been better to conceal them.

M. de Dietrich, who had purchased, in 1761, the seigniory of Reishoffen, near Haynenau, had the castle rebuilt in '69. This was confiscated property of the prince de Vaudemont, and bore the name of an ancient family of Alsace now extinct. The reigning prince of Nassau-Saarbruck gave brilliant fêtes in this castle upon the event of the marriage of his son with the Princess Maximiliana de Montbarrey. All the province was invited there—all the neighbouring courts. Everything was on a scale of the greatest magnificence. The hunts, feasts, and promenades lasted three days. M. d'Oberkirch and I were present. I met several persons of my acquaintance, both French and German. During the ball, the bridegroom would, on no account, consent to dance with the bride; he was at length threatened with a whipping in case of further refusal, and promised a deluge of sugar-plums and all sorts of sweetmeats if he com-

plied; whereupon he consented to lead her through a minuet. Though he showed so great an aversion to her who had a legal claim upon his attentions, he manifested a great sympathy for little Louisa de Dietrich, a child of his own age, and returned to sit beside her as soon as he could free himself from the *ennuyeuse* ceremony of attending on his bride. This was the husband whose "rapt embrace" awaited the young princess; I could not describe how much we laughed at these exaggerations, and at the demeanour of the little bridegroom.

My brother undertook to console him, and was showing him some prints in a large book; amongst these there happened to be one which represented a wedding procession, which as soon as the child saw, he shut the book, quickly exclaiming—

"Take it away, sir, take it away; it is too horrible. The wedding! what have I to do with that? it is shocking; and hold," continued he, pointing out a tall figure in the group, "there is one that is like Mademoiselle de Montbarrey."

What prognostics for the future!

CHAPTER VII.

The commander made maréchal-de-camp—The court at Montbéliard in mourning—Anger of Madame Hendel—Letter from Her Imperial Highness Mary—Madame Beckendorf—Cagliostro at Strasburg—Visit to Cardinal Rohan—Saverne—Its magnificence—Obelisk raised to Turenne—Cagliostro is announced—His reception—Charlatanism—His influence on me—Predictions—Death of Maria Theresa—Her courage—Verses—Departure for Montbéliard—M. de Waugens and M. de Wittinghoff—Death of Doctor Bernouillé—Marriage of Princess Frederica—The coadjutor prince of Lubeck—City and chapter of Lubeck—Titles of the prince—Arrival of the emperor at Montbéliard—I sup with his majesty—Object of his journey—Marriage of the grand-duke of Tuscany and Princess Elizabeth—Confidence of the duchess of Montbéliard—Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel—Friendship of Princess Antoinette for me—Departure dinner at Cardinal Rohan's—Cagliostro again—Folly of some women—Faith of the cardinal in Cagliostro—Confidence—Reflections.

My uncle, Major de Waldner, was one of those promoted on the first of March 1780 to the rank of field-marshal. I learned this news as I was setting out for Montbéliard, where, however, I was only to stay a week, for M. d'Oberkirch longed after Strasburg, where he was fond of residing. We found the court of Montbéliard in mourning, which

annoyed me very much, for my dress was green, and whilst a mourning dress was being made, I was obliged to retire to my chamber, whenever a visitor was announced. The princess de Montbéliard had lost the princess of Brandenburg-Bareith, reigning duchess of Wurtemberg, who died in the 48th year of her age. She was daughter to the Margrave Frederick and the Princess Frederica of Prussia, sister to the great Frederic, and was consequently, at the same time, sister-in-law and cousin-german to the duchess of Montbéliard. Her death caused little sorrow; she was a strange kind of person, and had been long separated from her husband; indeed, it seemed as if she could not make the Duke Charles, nor any person about her happy. Her only child had died in infancy. Though we sorrowed little for her, we were obliged to put on mourning, and to forego all our ordinary amusements.

I persuaded M. d'Oberkirch to alter his original intention, and to allow me to remain the entire summer at Montbéliard. I sent for my daughter, on whom the duchess doated, perhaps for the sake of her godmother. In the month of October, the Prince Frederick William, eldest son of the duchess, married the Princess Augusta of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel. He had entered as colonel into the Prussian service, and became major-general during

the war of the Austrian succession. His parents were delighted at this alliance. The duchess was so good a mother, that she seemed to live only for her children—their interest was ever present to her mind, and she was repaid, for never did there exist a more united or a happier family.

A month after this marriage, it was November, we received a visit, which I would be willing to pass unnoticed, but which I record, as the visitor was a celebrated person. It was the Abbé Raynal. He was returning from Geneva, where he had just published a new edition of his "Histoire Philosophique des Indes,' a work which has procured him a great reputation. He was a man of about sixty-nine years of age; to me he seemed very ugly, but that may have been the effect of prejudice, for I can rarely think those handsome whom I do not like. M. Raynal absolutely pursued me, overwhelming me with religious and political declamations, under pretext that I was of a serious turn of and mind, and capable of comprehending him—all that uttered with the accent of his birth-place, Pezenas, which he had conserved in all its purity. It would be impossible to speak with a more disagreeable Gascon accent. Perceiving that I did question his paradoxes, he suddenly interrupted his discourse, and asked me—

"Are you not a philosopher, baroness?"

"I have not that honour, Mr. Abbé."

"You are at least convinced of the absurdity of certain doctrines?"

"Let us not enter into a discussion, we could never agree. I am, thank God, a sound Protestant. I do not meddle with atheistical doctrines, my conscience is a sufficient guide for me."

"Oh! if you are a Protestant, madam, it is a different thing. I have nothing to say to you."

He turned his back on me, and did not address himself to me again. This left me in peace. All persons of celebrity, no matter who they might be, were received at Montbéliard, even though their opinions might not be approved by the princes. L'Abbé Raynal did not produce a very pleasing effect. He frightened the young princesses, and Madame Hendel could never pardon his having offered her a bad book of I know not what academy.

"If I had known that in time," said she, in a furious passion, "I would have ordered him a calico pillow-case."

This was the most severe punishment she could inflict on any one, for she asserted that nobody could sleep on calico, that being a fabric to which she could not reconcile herself. She only suffered a few in the house de Montbéliard, and these only as instruments of punishment, though it must be

confessed that they seldom saw the light. She herself confided to me the cause of her anger; I remember the circumstance well, for the same morning she brought me a letter from my dear princess, which I will transcribe here :—

"St. Petersburg, 14th (19th) Nov. 1780.

"My dear, my sweet friend, Lanele,

"Madame Beckendorf, governess to my children, has prayed me to send you the accompanying letter. She conjures you to send it to her daughter-in-law. This letter contains bills of exchange for two thousand roubles, which she is sending to her son. She prays you not to let this be known at Montbéliard. You will, for my sake, my dear friend, keep this secret; I count on your discretion. This dear creature prays me every day, in the name of heaven, to accelerate the return of her son, but I cannot, in conscience, interfere. I have written to Tille, telling her to do whatever she thinks best, and that, absent or present, she shall be always my dear friend. All this annoys me, and how I pity my poor, my good mamma. In the name of heaven, my dear Lanele, in the name of our friendship, be often with her. Induce your husband to go to Montbéliard; you know that you are looked upon there as a daughter of the house. The little Marie shall always accompany you; you

will be there in the bosom of friendship, and in a house of which all the inmates love you tenderly. Pray write to me quickly; my dear Lanele neglects me, and no longer loves, as she once did.

"Her faithful and sincere friend,

(Signed) "MARIE.

"I embrace my little goddaughter. The grand-duke sends you his compliments. My children are in excellent health; they and their papa constitute my felicity, and indeed are my only happiness amidst the perplexing cares of royalty."

This is not the place to relate the causes of the uneasiness of the grand-duchess; I will afterwards say more of this Madame de Beckendorf and her son. The princess knew that I was about to return to Strasburg for the winter, and conjured me to remain with her mother. My inclination would have prompted me to do so, but I was obliged to pass some months at Strasburg. The rank we held in that city imposed upon me this observance. On arriving there in the month of November we found the whole town busy, talking of a charlatan, who has since become very celebrated, and who was then commencing the system of jugglery which has since enabled him to play so extraordinary a part. I will here record simply what I have seen, leaving

my readers to decide upon what I could not comprehend.

Immediately upon our arrival we went to pay our respects to his eminence the cardinal de Rohan, prince-bishop of Strasburg. He had just returned from a tour that he had made on the other side of the Rhine, where he had been to visit his episcopal domains. This is the second or third cardinal of the name of Rohan who has been bishop of Strasburg, so that he looks upon the church lands as belonging to him, in some sort, by right of inheritance. He has erected at Saverne one of the most charming abodes in the world. The cardinal is a very handsome man, in whose devotion there is nothing ascetic, and who has no objection to the society of ladies. Though endowed with high intelligence, and possessing amiable manners, an extreme credulity led him into weaknesses which he has expiated in deep sorrow, and which have cost our poor queen many a bitter tear in the vexatious history of the necklace.

His eminence received us in his episcopal palace, which was indeed fit for a sovereign prince. The style of living in his house was extravagant in the highest degree, and would almost exceed belief. I shall only mention one thing, which will give an idea of the rest. He kept fourteen *maîtres*

d'hôtel and twenty-five *valets de chambre*. Only think! it was three o'clock in the afternoon when we arrived; it was the vigil of All Saints; the cardinal was coming out of his chapel, dressed in a soutane of scarlet moire, and a rochet of English lace of inestimable value. When on occasions of great ceremony he officiated at Versailles, he wore an alb of lace *en point à l'aiguille* of such beauty that the assistants were almost afraid to touch it. His arms and his device were worked *en médaillon* above all the large flowers. This alb was estimated at a hundred thousand livres. On the day of which I speak he wore the rochet of English lace, one of his least beautiful, as his secretary, the Abbé Geergel, told us. He carried in his hand an illuminated missal, a family heirloom, of which the magnificence would have attracted attention, even if its antiquity had not excited respect. Printed books were beneath the dignity of the cardinal de Rohan.

He came to meet us with a politeness and grace that I have rarely seen in any one. He inquired after the princess de Montbéliard and the grand-duchess of Russia, as if that were the sole subject of his thoughts. He spoke of his tour, and related a thousand interesting details. I remember that amongst other places, he spoke of Saltzbach, where the maréchal de Turenne is interred.

"I thought of erecting a monument to this great man, and immediately purchased a field where a bullet killed him, and at the same time wounded the fortunes of France. I intend to get a pyramid erected there, and I will build beside it a lodge, in which I will establish, as guardian, an old pensioner of the regiment of Turenne. I would prefer an Alsatian. The pyramid shall be twenty-five feet high, and planted around with laurel, the entire surrounded by an iron railing. What do you think of this project, baroness?"

We assured his eminence that it was highly patriotic. A very interesting conversation then commenced, in which I took a real pleasure, the cardinal being both well-informed and well-bred, when we were suddenly interrupted by a gentleman usher, who, opening the folding doors, announced, "His eminence the count de Cagliostro."

I turned my head quickly; I had heard this adventurer spoken of since my arrival in Strasburg, but I had not yet met him. I was stunned at seeing him enter in this manner into the mansion of the bishop, to hear him announced with this pomp; and still more was I astonished at the manner in which he was received. He had been in Alsace since the month of September, and had caused great commotion, pretending to cure all sorts of maladies. As he not only refused to take

money, but even bestowed a great deal on the poor, large crowds followed him, notwithstanding the failure of his so-called universal panacea. He only cured hypochondriacs, or those whose imagination was sufficiently strong to aid the remedy. The police kept a strict eye over him; they watched him, but he affected to defy them. Some said that he was an Arab, however his accent was more that of an Italian or Piedmontese, and I have since learned that he was in reality from Naples. At the period of which I speak, in order to dazzle the vulgar mind, he slept in a fauteuil and ate nothing but cheese.

He was not, strictly speaking, handsome, but never have I seen a more remarkable countenance. His glance was so penetrating that one would be almost tempted to call it supernatural. I could not describe the expression of his eyes, it was, so to say, a mixture of flame and ice. He attracted and repulsed, and whilst he terrified, inspired an insurmountable curiosity, Two portraits have been painted of him, both very good likenesses, and yet each widely different from the other. He wore, attached to his watch chain and upon his fingers, diamonds which, if they were what they appeared, would be worth a king's ransom. He pretended that they were his own manufacture. All this frippery revealed unmistakably the charlatan.

Scarcely had the cardinal perceived, than he ran to meet him; and whilst he saluted him at the door, said something which I did not try to overhear. Both approached us. I had risen at the same time as the bishop, but immediately resumed my place, not wishing to allow this adventurer to believe that I would accord him any attention. I was, however, soon forced to think of him, and I acknowledge now, in all humility, that I had no cause to repent, having always had a passion for the marvellous.

His eminence contrived, at the end of about five minutes, not without some opposition on my part, as well as on that of M. d'Oberkirch, to make the conversation general. He had the tact not to name me, had he done so I should have instantly risen; but he contrived to manage the conversation so that his *protégé* sometimes addressed us, and politeness obliged us to reply. Cagliostro all this time continued to stare at me; my husband made me a sign to come away, but I felt the glance of these deep mysterious eyes enter my bosom like a gimblet. I can find no better comparison to express the effect they produced upon me. He suddenly interrupted M. de Rohan, who, *par parenthèse*, was overwhelmed with joy, and said to me abruptly—

"Madam, your mother no longer lives; you have

scarcely known her, and you have one daughter. You are the only daughter of your family, and you will have no more children."

I was so surprised that I looked round me, not supposing it possible that he could have the audacity to address a lady of my rank in such a place and such a presence. I thought he was speaking to somebody else, and did not answer.

"Reply, madam," said the cardinal, with a supplicating air.

"My lord, Madame d'Oberkirch speaks upon such subjects only with those with whom she has the honour of being acquainted," replied my husband, in a tone that was almost impertinent. I feared that he might forget the respect due to the bishop.

He rose and made a haughty salute. I did the same. The cardinal, accustomed to find flatterers in all who approached him, was embarrassed; he did not know what to do: however, he drew near to M. d'Oberkirch, Cagliostro still staring me, and addressed him in words so soothing that it was impossible to resist their influence.

"M. de Cagliostro is a learned man; we must not treat him as an ordinary person," added he. "Remain a few moments, my dear baron, allow Madame d'Oberkirch to reply; there is neither sin nor impropriety, I assure you; and even if there

were, have I not the power of absolving in reserved cases ?"

"I have not the honour of being of your flock, my lord," interrupted M. d'Oberkirch, with some slight remains of ill-humour.

"I know that but too well, sir, and am sorry for it. You would do honour to our church. Baroness, tell us whether M. de Cagliostro has been mistaken —tell us, I pray you."

"He has not been mistaken as to what concerns the past," I replied; not being able to refuse to bear testimony to the truth.

"And I am as little mistaken in what concerns the future," said Cagliostro, in a tone so *metallic* that it echoed like the sound produced by a trumpet veiled with crape.

I will candidly confess that I felt at the moment an intense desire to consult that man, and that nothing but the fear of annoying M. d'Oberkirch, whose aversion for all these mummeries I knew well, could prevent me. The cardinal stared open-mouthed; he was evidently under the control of this skilful juggler, as he has since too well proved. That day will remain for ever engraven on my memory. It was with difficulty that I tore myself from a fascination which I cannot yet comprehend, but whose influence I could not deny. I have not yet finished with Cagliostro; and what I am about

to relate is at least as extraordinary, and more generally known, than what I have narrated. He predicted the death of the Empress Maria Theresa, and even foretold the hour at which she should expire. M. de Rohan told it to me in the evening, and it was five days after that the news arrived. This great sovereign's death was a serious loss; were she still alive, things would not wear in France the aspect that they now do. She ruled Europe by the power of her genius; she and Catherine II., the Semiramis of the north, have had no equal amongst the sovereigns of this century, excepting, perhaps, Frederick of Prussia. Maria Theresa displayed, during her last illness, a heroic courage, sublime resolution, and presence of mind. She wished to know, as nearly as possible, the moment of her death; her son, the Emperor Joseph, fainted on hearing the decree pronounced by the chief physician. The empress supported, consoled, and advised him. To the last moment she was occupied with the cares of her kingdom, and dictated, with extraordinary precision, letters to her august son, for the regulation of the empire and his own conduct. The following verses were inscribed beneath her portrait :—

To all a woman's witching grace
She joined a manly strength of mind;
High powers of thought, each charm of face,
With godlike majesty combined.

I set off for Montbéliard in March 1781. I was delighted. The health of my daughter had been so delicate during the winter, that I had not been able to visit these dear friends. I gave a place in my carriage to the baron de Wanger, of whom I have already spoken. He had been appointed lieutenant-general the year before. He possessed honour and talent, but, unfortunately, no virtuous woman could receive him often at her house. He led a strange life, always busy about those who would accept him as a lover, and often giving himself a great deal of trouble about ladies who took no interest in him. He did not, however, pour himself forth with me: he knew that these things were not to my taste; but he was *au reste* very entertaining, as was also the baron de Wittinghoff, commander of the regiment of Hesse-Darmstadt, who accompanied us. This latter was a very distinguished officer. He was born in Courland in 1722; he quitted the service of Poland for that of France when he was at first appointed colonel of the Royal-Bavière; he wore the order of the knights of l'Epée de Suède.

We found the princess de Montbéliard grieving for the death of the famous physician, Bernouillé. He resided at Basle, and her royal highness often sent for him to prescribe for her children. She reposed a boundless confidence in him. He was a

botanist, anatomist, and natural philosopher. This family were reared in the bosom of science. John and James Bernouillé, both celebrated mathematicians, were, the one his father, the other his uncle.

"I am afflicted," said the princess, with a smile, to see him depart so soon; I had hoped to die by his hand."

Some days after my arrival the duchess told me in confidence that her second daughter, the Princess Frederica was to be married to Prince Frederick Louis of Holstein, coadjutor of Lubeck. The marriage was celebrated on the 26th June following. After passing a few days at my own home, I returned to be present at the ceremony.

The Princess Frederica was at that time only sixteen years of age. She had a lovely face and amiable disposition. She was not as tall, nor as regularly beautiful, as the grand-duchess of Russia; her countenance portrayed her character, which was gentle and melancholy.

The prince, who was twenty-six years old, had an aquiline nose, his chin retreated, and the under lip protruded a little. He had in general a serene and thoughtful ir. The festivities of this marriage lasted several days. This alliance caused a great joy through the entire principality, where the house of Wurtemberg was very popular. The match was, however, far inferior to that of the Princess Doro-

thea. The prince had been coadjutor to the prince-bishop of Lubeck, his uncle, and administrator of Oldenburg since the year 1776, when his cousin, Prince Frederick William of Holstein, resigned in his favour. He was also nephew to the king of Sweden.

The city of Lubeck, the chief of the seventy-two Hanseatic cities, and which forms an independent republic, embraced the confession of Augsburg in 1535. The bishop (Protestant) does not exercise a sovereign authority; he is dependent on the archbishop of Bremen, and resides generally at Eutin. The city and chapter of Lubeck elect their bishop. This chapter is composed of twenty-two Protestant and four Catholic canons, making in all twenty-six. This bishoprick, situated in the circle of Lower Saxony, was founded in the city of Oldenburg by Otho the First. In 1163, it was transferred to Lubeck. Lutheranism was established under the thirty-ninth titular bishop, and has flourished under his successors, who, since 1530, have been Lutherans. John of Holstein, who was bishop in 1654, saved the see of Lubeck from being secularized at Munster, as some others were. Touched with gratitude for this service, the chapter decided that the prelacy should be confirmed to six princes of Holstein, who should be elected in succession—a rule which has ever since been observed. The

prévôt of the church is appointed alternately by the church and by the chapter. The bishop has no power over the city, but he sits at the Diet on the bench of Protestant bishops, beside him of Osnaburg.

The title of the prince-bishop of Lubeck is, bishop of Lubeck, duke of Schleswig-Holstein, of Hormarck and of Dietmaisen, count of Oldenburg and of Delmenhorst. He resides at Eutin, though he has an episcopal palace at Lubeck. His arms are, a field azure, charged with a cross *or*, surmounted by an episcopal mitre.

Scarcely were the wedding festivities over, and just as we were returning to our habitual quiet, without, however, forgetting the dear princess we had lost, when we were thrown into commotion by a very different piece of intelligence. On the 7th August we were at Etupes, on a bowling-green, of which the prince was very fond. We were talking of our two dear princesses, when suddenly a courier presented himself, all booted, before the duke, regardless of etiquette, which, however, was often laid aside at this patriarchal court, and exclaimed—

"Monseigneur, monseigneur, the emperor is at Montbéliard, and awaits your highness. We did not wait to hear it a second time, and in a quarter of an hour we were on our way to the city. The emperor had alighted as a private individual at the hôtel of the Red Lion. He was returning from

a journey through the north of Germany, the Low Countries, and a part of France. He travelled under the name of count de Falkenstein. He was highly esteemed at Paris, where his august sister, Marie Antoinette, had prepared for him every sort of amusement. There was a captivating simplicity in his manner and character. For example, at Nantes, when the crowd was pushed back rather rudely to allow him to pass, he said to the officer who commanded the escort—

"Gently, sir, gently; one man does not require so much room to pass."

As soon as we arrived at Montbéliard, the duke and duchess, the young princes, and all the household of their highnesses, repaired to the hotel, where his imperial majesty was staying. The duke was about to kneel to do him homage, conformable to his duty as prince of the Roman empire, but the emperor stopped him, saying in a friendly manner—

"No ceremonies, my dear duke; it is the count of Falkenstein who pays you a visit."

We were afterwards presented to Joseph, who made a most agreeable impression on me. He seemed to be proud, not of his high position, but of his personal superiority. He was very tall, but held himself perfectly straight. He wore a wig, which he sometimes, unconsciously, pulled awry.

His manners were noble and simple, too simple perhaps; and certainly his visit did no service to France, where it tended to bring royalty into discredit by putting kings on a level with the lower classes of society, who were not slow to profit by the circumstance. Joseph the Second's sense of justice, his moderation, his humanity, made him adored by his subjects, whilst his gracious and unaffected manners inspired at first sight as much affection as respect. I have already expressed this opinion, and I now repeat it. I have but one reproach to make him, it is on the subject of his philosophic tendencies. He ambitioned, it is said, to walk in the footsteps of the great Frederick. He wished to digest and put into operation a new plan of government conformable to his new ideas. As far as my limited knowledge would allow me to judge, I think that he made a mistake. All philosopher as he was, he did not call to see M. de Voltaire, at Ferney, a loss for which the patriarch could scarcely console himself.

As soon as their highnesses had paid their respects to the emperor, they conducted him to the castle, where an apartment had been hastily prepared for him. We had the honour of supping with his majesty, who was particularly gracious to me on learning that I was the best-beloved friend of the grand-duchess. I observed much, and

spoke little, divining from certain signs, easily understood by me, who was so well acquainted with the peculiarities of the family; divining, I say, that some subject of grave but joyous import occupied the minds of the prince and princess. In the evening we played for very small stakes, and some remark being made to the emperor on this subject, he said that he would scruple to squander the money of his people. I thought this answer very praiseworthy, but savouring a little of affectation; indeed, it seemed to me that this monarch always spoke and acted as if there were a moralist standing behind his chair, busy in making a portrait of his virtues.

The afternoon of the following day was spent in visiting Etupes. The emperor was delighted with it, even though he had so recently been at Versailles and Trianon. He was particularly attentive to the Princess Elizabeth, the youngest daughter of the princess of Wurtemberg, questioning her on several subjects, answering her remarks, commenting on them, and smiling at her repartees. All the court remarked it, and in the evening I expressed my pleasure on the subject to her royal highness.

"Yes, my dear Lanele," said she, "I am very happy, and I will no longer delay to confide to you the cause of my joy. The visit of the emperor had

no other object than the marriage of my daughter Elizabeth with the Archduke Francis of Tuscany. You can imagine how delighted the duke and I are."

I was so delighted that I could not help kissing the hand of his royal highness. This was so brilliant and so unexpected a match, and to be proposed by the Emperor Joseph in person was so flattering a distinction.

The emperor set off on the 9th, enchanted with our little court, where he had made an impression that could never be effaced. However I must say, though I do justice to the merit of this great monarch, that I far prefer his august sister, Queen Marie Antoinette. She was as good as unaffected, but she was more regal, more dignified, perhaps even more frank; she was more like the great Maria Theresa.

The emperor was only two days gone, when we received another visit; it was from the landgravine of Hesse-Cassel, second wife of the landgrave Frederick XI., whose first wife was the Princess Mary of England. I say *we* when I speak of this noble family with whom I was as it were incorporated, and of which I was considered a member. My readers will then pardon me for thus associating myself with those whose affection for me equalled that inspired by the ties of blood.

The landgravine of Hesse-Cassel, princess of Brandenburg-Schwadt, was aunt to the grand-duchess, being sister to her mother. She had held, as I have already said, my daughter at the baptismal font, and was most kind and affectionate to me. She was accompanied by the princess of Hesse-Rheinfels-Rothemburg. The latter professed a most ardent affection for me, declaring that I was perfect, and that her sister, the duchess of Bouillon had told her so. I was not insensible to these attentions, which were alike flattering and honourable, but I was obliged to renounce her amiable society. M. d'Oberkirch was most anxious that I should return to Strasburg, whither matters of business recalled us; and notwithstanding my enviable position at Montbéliard, I was impatient to find myself again *at home*. I took leave of my august hosts with the same feeling of painful emotion that I always experienced in parting from them, but I promised to return soon and remain a long time.

"Ah! my dear Lanele," the duchess used often to say, "why do you not remain always with us? I would give you the highest place at court, and I would be so glad of your society, now especially, when all my daughters have deserted me."

The duchess certainly loved me like a mother. Scarcely was I settled at Strasburg when I was presented with a letter bearing an immense seal;

it was from the cardinal de Rohan, inviting M. d'Oberkirch and me to dine with him in three days. I did not understand this piece of politeness, to which we were not accustomed.

"I am convinced," said my husband, "that he wishes to bring us in contact with his cursed sorcerer, on whom I would willingly play a trick."

"He is at Paris," I replied.

"He has been here for the last month, followed by a dozen foolish women, whom he has persuaded that he will cure of their malady; it is a frenzy, a madness; and what is most annoying in the business is, that they are all women of quality. They have come after him from Paris, and are here cooped up in little cells; but everything is alike indifferent to them, provided they be under the eye of the great Copt, their master and their physician. Was there ever seen such madness?"

"I thought that he had gone to attend the prince of Scribère?"

"He did go, and has come back attended by this *cortège*. Since his return he has cured an under officer of dragoons, who was believed to be very ill, and who had only an imaginary fever. It is since then that his reputation has become so great. I acknowledge that he carries on things on a great scale, and is a philanthropist of perhaps the best class."

This word philanthropist, which had been only lately invented by the encyclopedians, seemed to me as strange as what preceded. I had seen, the evening before, at a printseller's, a portrait of Cagliostro, with the following verses inscribed beneath :—

Man's secret thoughts his glance can read ;
Each day brings blessings in his train ;
Life he prolongs, the poor relieves,
His acts themselves his only gain.

I do not think it would be possible to express more foolish sentiments in more silly verses.

We hesitated a long time before replying to the prince. M. d'Oberkirch was much inclined to refuse, whilst I, on the contrary, felt an irrepressible desire to see again the sorcerer, as my husband called him. At length the fear of being unpolite to his eminence determined us to accept the invitation. I assure you that my heart beat as I entered the cardinal's palace. I experienced an indefinable emotion of fear, which was not, however, wholly devoid of charm. We found that our suspicions had been well grounded, Cagliostro was amongst the company at the cardinal's.

It would be impossible to give an idea of the passion, the madness with which people pursued this man. It would appear incredible to any one who had not seen it. He was surrounded, he was

beset; happy was the person esteemed upon whom his glance fell. Nor was it alone in our province that this infatuation prevailed, the *furor* was not a whit less intense at Paris: nor had M. d'Oberkirch exaggerated, a dozen women of rank, as well as two actresses, had followed Cagliostro, that, under his direction, they might continue the prescribed regimen, and the cure of the dragoon officer, whether real or feigned, had riveted his power over the public mind. I had determined not to make myself singular, and to adapt myself to the opinions of the people about me, in going through this scene, or at least to appear to do so; but I was fully resolved that this man should have no opportunity of exercising his pedantic foolery over me, and, above all, that he should never cross the threshold of my door.

As soon as Cagliostro perceived me he made a very respectful salute, which I returned without any affectation of haughtiness or condescension. I did not know why the cardinal attached so much importance to persuading me rather than another, but during the entire time of dinner—there were fifteen persons present—he seemed to think only of me. There was an insinuating grace in the manner in which he endeavoured to bring me over to his opinion. He placed me on his right hand, spoke almost exclusively with me, and endeavoured

by every possible means to imbue me with his convictions. I resisted gently but firmly. He became impatient, and was about to make some confidential communications when we rose from table. If I had not myself seen it, I never could have believed that a prince of the Catholic church, a Rohan, a man in other respects intelligent and estimable, could allow himself to be so influenced by an impostor of this species, as absolutely to renounce the exercise of his freewill.

"Indeed, baroness, you are too sceptical. Since what he has said to yourself, and what I have related, have not persuaded you, I must acknowledge all; but remember that I am about to confide to you a great secret."

I became very much embarrassed; I set little value on his secret, and his well-known imprudence made me fear that I should have the honour of sharing his confidence with persons unworthy of his notice. He divined my feeling.

"Do not say no," interrupted he, "and listen to me. You see this?"

He showed me a large diamond that he wore on his little finger, and on which the Rohan arms were engraved. This ring was worth, at least, twenty thousand francs.

"It is a beautiful gem, monseigneur; I have been admiring it."

"Well, it is he who made it; made it out of nothing. I was present during the whole operation—my eyes fixed on the crucible. Is not that science, baroness? People cannot say that he is wheedling or deceiving me. The jeweller and the engraver have estimated this ring at twenty-five thousand livres. You will admit that he would be a strange kind of cheat who would make such presents." I acknowledge that I was stunned; M. de Rohan perceived it, and continued, believing himself now sure of victory.

"This is not all—he can make gold! and has made in my presence five or six thousand livres in this palace. I shall have more; I shall have a great deal; he will make me the richest prince in Europe! These are not dreams, madam; they are positive facts. All his prophecies that have been realised! all the miraculous cures that he has effected! I repeat that he is a most extraordinary —a most sublime man, whose knowledge is only equalled by his goodness. What alms he gives! What good he does! That exceeds all power of imagination."

"What, monseigneur, has not your eminence given him anything for that; no promise in writing that may compromise you? Pardon my curiosity, but as you have been so kind as to confide to me this secret, I——"

"You are right, madam; and I can assure you that he has never asked nor received anything from me."

"Ah! monseigneur," cried I, "this man must hope to induce you to make extraordinary sacrifices, when he purchases your confidence at so high a price. In your place, I would be on my guard; he may lead you farther than you think."

The cardinal smiled incredulously; but I am sure that in after days, when the affair of the necklace occurred, when Cagliostro and Madame de la Mothe had plunged him into an abyss of ruin, I am sure that then he remembered my words.

We chatted thus almost during the whole evening, and I at length discovered the motive of these cajoleries. The poor prince had not acted thus of his own accord. Cagliostro knew of my intimate friendship with the grand-duchess, and had insisted that his patron should endeavour to persuade me of his occult power, that he might through me get an introduction to her imperial highness. The plan was not badly conceived, but it failed before the strength of *my will*—I do not say of my reason, that would have been insufficient; nor do I say my conviction, for I felt it shaken. It is certain that had I yielded to my admiration for the marvellous, I too might have become the dupe of this sharper. The thought of my daughter

and my husband preserved me from this folly, the only serious one I have had to contend with, in my life. There are so many charms in the mysterious, there is so much *éclat* attached to astrological discoveries, and to the occult sciences. I cannot deny that Cagliostro possessed an almost demoniacal power: he fascinated the mind; he benumbed, so to speak, the reflective faculties. I do not undertake to explain this phenomenon, I merely relate it, leaving to those more learned than I, the task of penetrating the mystery.

This *disinterested* man afterwards beguiled Cardinal Rohan of immense sums. It is, however, said, that he is still completely his dupe, and never speaks of him but with tears in his eyes. What a strange man that prelate was! How he degraded his dignity! What a great deal of harm his weakness and indiscretion have caused. His sorrows and his sufferings have expiated his faults, but his conduct was highly blameable.

CHAPTER VIII.

Birth of a prince—Projected journey of the grand-duke and duchess of Russia—They leave St. Petersburg—The parents of the grand-duchess go to meet her—I go with them—Reception at Stuttgard—I fall sick—Devotion of Mademoiselle Cramm—Regret—Consolation—Projected journey to Paris—Journal—Birth of the dauphin—Golden dolphins—The nurse—Anniversary of the reunion of Strasburg to France—Rejoicings—M. Gerard—Play by M. Rochon de Chabannes—Tribute of the peasants—Princess Christiana—Chapter of Remiremont—Disputes between *les dames tantes* and *les dames nièces*—Baroness Wimpffen—M. Flachsland—M. de St. Germain, minister of war—M. de Maurepas—His presentation at Fontainebleau—Singular dress—Tragic event—Death of the princess of Wurtemberg.

WE were at Montbéliard the 27th of September '81, when a son was born to the Duke Frederick William* of Wurtemberg. He was named Frederick William Charles. The prince of Montbéliard, his grandfather, was delighted. He could not contain his joy, and was never weary of speaking of so happy an event. The birth of the prince was celebrated with great fêtes, at which, as a matter of course, we were present; the happiness of these

* Frederick William, reigning duke in 1797, elector in 1802, first king of Wurtemberg in 1806, died 30th August 1816. Frederick William Charles, his son, succeeded, and has been a blessing to his subjects.

dear princes was as dear to me as my own. A fresh cause of joy soon presented itself. The grand-duchess was about to make a tour, during which she expected to meet her parents, and it may be easily supposed that I felt no small desire to join the party. M. d'Oberkirch consented, and it was agreed that we should all go to Vienna to meet her. The day of departure seemed, to our impatient longings, to linger on its way. The duchess of Montbéliard became absolutely thin through vexation. I must not forget to mention that the grand-duchess had expressly requested that I should be of the party. It can be easily imagined that, after so long an absence, we had a thousand things to say to one another. It was arranged that I should leave my daughter to the care of my mother-in-law, and, painful as it was to separate from my child, I felt that it was indispensable, and resigned myself for the sake of my dear princess.

The Grand-duke Paul and the Grand-duchess Marie had already set out from St. Petersburg, attended by a numerous suite. They had obtained from the empress permission to travel, and profited by the indulgence with the eagerness natural to their age. They were to traverse Poland, Austria, Italy, and to visit France. They were accompanied by the eldest brother of the princess, Frederick

William, who had quitted the Prussian service. The grand-duke and his august spouse travelled under the title of count and countess du Nord. The letters of her imperial highness spoke of nothing but the joy she felt in the hope of seeing us all again. She narrated the most minute particulars, and hurried, as she said, that she might be the sooner in our arms. The duchess of Montbéliard invited me to travel in the same carriage with her and his highness the duke.

"For," she said, "it is with you alone, my dear Lanele, that we can speak freely of my daughter; you share in our feelings."

At length the important day arrived; we all set off for Stuttgard, where the reigning prince awaited us. We were afterwards to proceed to Munich and Vienna, as the grand-duchess was to pass through the latter city on her way to Italy. Our journey as far as the capital of the duchy of Wurtemburg was a continued scene of gaiety. We laughed, we sang; nothing could exceed our happiness as we reflected that we were on the way to rejoin a beloved daughter, a faithful friend. A most flattering reception awaited us at Stuttgard. His serene highness the Duke Charles detained us several days; he had prepared us every kind of amusement; we could only half enjoy them, our thoughts were elsewhere.

We had already passed a week at Stuttgard, when one evening as I was playing *piquet à écrire* with several persons, I felt a heaviness of the head and sickness of the stomach. I thought that repose would do me good, and asked permission of her royal highness to retire. It was granted, but I was laughed at, and told that I was too fond of myself, and accused of idleness; even the princess of Montbéliard said:

"When one is going to meet a *sister*, there is no excuse for falling idle."

All this did not prevent my being seized with a terrible fever during the night, and the next day the physicians declared that I had the small-pox. This announcement overwhelmed me, not so much on account of this terrible malady and its consequences, as because it prevented me from continuing my journey.

I repeated incessantly, "I shall not see the Grand-duchess Marie," and wept like an infant whilst I said so.

I was kept in a retired chamber, as is always done in such cases. The departure of the family for Vienna was concealed from me, that I might not have fresh cause for vexation; and this secrecy was easily observed as I was not visited by anybody. I was told that their imperial highnesses had changed their route, and would not visit

Vienna until their return. I believed it, and promised M. d'Oberkirch, who did not leave me for a moment, to take the greatest care of myself.

I had received many marks of friendship and attention from the family de Cramm. Mdlle. de Cramm was at that time twenty-one years of age, and in every respect a most distinguished person. She and I felt a great sympathy for one another, and became intimate from our first acquaintance. Her mother had married successively two cousins-german of her own name. This family de Cramm is from Brunswick, and the armorial bearings are three fleurs-de-lis on a field azure. These are plainly the arms of France. This circumstance astonished me very much: it would be interesting to know the cause of the coincidence; but I must plead guilty to the charge of having neglected to inquire where my curiosity could be satisfied.

When Mdlle. de Cramm learned that I had been attacked with small-pox, she did not hesitate an instant; but, regardless of danger, of contagion, forgetting her youth and lovely face, she came and shut herself up with me, exposing herself to the horrors entailed by this scourge of female beauty. She tended me with unparalleled devotedness and affection; day and night found her still beside my pillow, anxious to divine my every wish, which she satisfied with a grace that doubled the

value of the service. Never will I forget what she has done for me.

During some days I was in imminent danger. I really believe that I owed my life to the good management of my nurse-tender. M. d'Oberkirch was so grateful that I believe he would have given her all he possessed had she only asked it. The danger once over, I became rapidly better, and was soon convalescent. It was now impossible to conceal from me the truth as to the route taken by the countess du Nord; everybody was talking on this subject. I was again plunged into despair; I could neither be silent nor console myself.

"Monsieur," said Mdlle. de Cramm one day to M. d'Oberkirch, "the poor baroness will die of grief for not having seen the princess."

"She shall suffer no loss if she will only be sensible, take care of herself, and get well quickly; for I will take her to Paris to await the arrival of her imperial highness. She will thus see her more at her ease, and enjoy her society longer."

I overheard these words, and would have jumped with joy if I had not been bound down upon a bed of sickness.

"Oh! I promise to do all that you wish; to take, without hesitation, the most bitter medicines, and the most disagreeable draughts, that I may be able to accompany you. Your promise will do more for

the recovery of my health than all the prescriptions of the physicians."

In fact, the prospect of so great a happiness comforted me, so that my health was restored as if by enchantment. My lovely infirmarian shared my joy, and kept up its efficacious effects by continually speaking of my meeting with the princess, and pointing it out as the term and recompense of my patient docility. M. d'Oberkirch kept his word, and when the count and countess du Nord arrived in Paris, on the 18th of May '82, I was there to receive them, as shall be related in its proper place.

It was during this tour that I kept a journal, which, upon my return to Alsace, I wrote out at length, adding some particulars. It is this journal that I am about to present to my readers, and if I make some additions I shall still always return to my text, narrating the events of each day, that I may be sure of not committing an error.

As soon as it was possible for me to travel, M. d'Oberkirch brought me to Strasburg, where my father awaited me with impatience. He found me looking very ill, though not disfigured, as, thanks to the cautions and entreaties of Mdlle. de Cramm, I had mastered the irritation I felt, and forbore to touch my face.

During my illness a great event had occurred at

Versailles. The queen had given birth to the dauphin. He had been baptized on the day following that of his birth by the cardinal prince de Rohan, grand almoner, bishop of Strasburg, and held at the font, in the name of the emperor and Madame de Piémont, by Monsieur, brother to the king, and by the countess de Provence. It became the fashion to wear dolphins of gold, ornamented with precious stones, in the same fashion that Jeannettes were worn. The birth of this royal child diffused universal joy through the kingdom. So great was the anxiety about his health that a *gardienne du ventre* was appointed for his nurse, in order to report to the faculty the state of health in which this precious woman was, and who, that the account may be very exact, scarcely ever lost sight of her.

In Strasburg, as well as in all the other cities of the empire, there were great public rejoicings. With us they nearly clashed with those which celebrated the anniversary of the union of Strasburg with France, which had taken place in 1681, consequently a hundred years before the birth of the dauphin. The magistracy gave marriage portions to ten Protestant and to as many Catholic young girls, and granted to their husbands a participation in municipal rights. The ten Protestant marriages were celebrated in the *temple neuf*, and the ten

Catholics in the cathedral, where a Te Deum was sung in Latin, whilst in the Protestant church the hymn was sung in German. All the artillery of the town fired military salutes. The cardinal de Rohan officiated at the cathedral, assisted by the bishop of Tournay, and set off next day for Versailles, where the ceremonies of the *couches de la reine* made his presence necessary. Medals of gold and silver, bearing a likeness of Louis XVI., were struck on this occasion, and presented to the persons of distinction and high functionaries of the town; amongst these were, le marquis de Contades, commander in the city; the marquis de la Salle, the administrator; M. de la Galaizière, the royal *préteur;* M. Gerard, the *Stallmeister* and *Ammeister;* the counsellors of the *chambre des treize, des quinze,* and *des vingt-et-un;* the members of the grand senate, *les échevins des tribus,* &c. Thirty-three gold medals were struck, each of the value of two hundred livres, and three hundred and fifty, each worth twelve livres. There were besides fifteen hundred silver medals, each worth a florin, and bearing, on one side, this inscription, 'Argentorentium felix,' and on the other, a fleur-de-lis.

M. Gerard, the royal *prêteur,* who was intimate with M. Rochon, of Chabannes, prayed him to compose a dramatic piece suited to the occasion. This *morceau,* called 'The Tribute,' had great

success. Local circumstances, and the peculiar position of Strasburg, furnished the subject of this piece, of which the morality was to show the importance and necessity of overcoming the ancient prejudices and antipathy existing between the German and French nations, sentiments which were still found to exist amongst the humbler classes. A graceful train of thought, felicitous expressions, and charming verses, were enthusiastically applauded. The representation took place on the 1st of October, and was not open to the public; a mode of proceeding that was blamed, for it had been intended that this piece should touch the public mind. It is true that few of the people of the humbler classes spoke French, and perhaps the managers remembered that on one or two former occasions, when the performance was gratis, the audience were not satisfied.

"Gentlemen," said they, "we have remained to the very end: you ought to give us something to drink."

The Princess Christina of Saxony, abbess of Remiremont, was present at the comedy, as well as several foreign princes and seigniors, with all the nobility of Alsace.

M. Gerard had succeeded, as royal *prêteur*, to the baron d'Antigny, who had succeeded his uncle, M. Gayot. The latter was as much esteemed for

his scrupulous honesty as for the vigour and extent of his understanding. He obtained the office of general administrator for the war department, and died some few years since. M. Gerard was the bearer of some gold medals to the king, the royal family, and the ministers. On one side was the head of Louis XVI., and on the other, 'Argentoratum felix votis sæcularibus, 1781.' It was Professor Oberlin who composed this inscription.

I was not present at these fêtes, but I received an account of them from several friends and members of my family. I collected the particulars carefully, believing that the like may not be seen again for a hundred years, if ever. I love all that is rare and curious.

I spoke awhile ago of the Princess Christina of Saxony, abbess of Remiremont, and I am happy to have an opportunity of speaking of her more in detail. The chapter of Remiremont is very interesting; it possesses many remarkable peculiarities, all of which I inquired into minutely. We often met the Princess Christina, and several of the lady canonesses at Montbéliard and Strasburg. They were almost continually *en route*, though there was a great deal of amusement carried on at the abbaye, and much company received in the private apartments of the princess as well as *au bâtiment des étrangers*.

The noble chapter of St. Pierre de Remiremont, situated in the diocese of St. Dié, was founded in 620, by St. Romaric. It is composed of an abbess and two dignitaries; *la doyenne* and *la secrète*.

There are besides the *almonière* and *la soarière*. The canonesses do not make vows; they may return to the world, and even marry. Each has the right of choosing a *niece*, that is to say, a coadjutrix, who is to succeed her; and it is necessary that each should prove, both by father and mother, a noble descent for nine generations, or 225 years.

The lady-nieces pay six hundred livres yearly to the lady-aunts for their support.

The canonesses are seculars, and under the immediate control of the holy see. The abbess is a princess of the empire, and enjoys regal privileges. The chapter has the right of fixing the share that it contributes to the expenses of the state, and has courts of high, low, and moyenne justice in Sénéchaussée of Remiremont.

The canonesses wear a cross, on which is an image of St. Romaric attached to a wide blue ribbon stripped with red, which they wear scarf-wise from the right shoulder to the left.

The chapter has always enjoyed the immediate protection of the crown, since the days of its founder, St. Romaric, who was a prince of the royal blood, even to our own time. The duke of

Lorraine used to come in person to Remiremont, to swear to protect the rights of the abbaye, and to punish any who should invade them. This ceremony was conducted with great pomp; the officers of the abbaye, the twelve canons *curés*, and chaplains, attended in their robes of ceremony. Amongst the prerogatives of the abbess, the most valuable was that of setting free, on certain days, all the prisoners in the conciergerie.

At the period of which I speak, a difficulty had arisen about a matter of discipline between the ladies-aunts and the ladies-nieces. The latter had the power of voting only by the voice of the aunt; they wished to emancipate themselves from this tutellage, and to give their suffrages freely. This discussion caused a great deal of scandal, or at least a great éclat, which was followed by a lawsuit.

As to the rest, there was a great deal of liberty allowed in this establishment, which had, on the whole, a very worldly air. The prebendaries, and with a still better right, the nieces, dressed according to the prevailing fashion, without, however, laying aside the cross and ribbon, which characterize the chapter and the dignity.

The Princess Christina took the part of the young canonesses. This lady was kind even to weakness, and unfortunately of a revolting ugliness. She generally abode in Strasburg, and

always treated me with great kindness and affection. She had been elected in '73 to succeed the Princess Anne Charlotte of Lorraine. Ladies of the highest rank, both French and foreigners, ambitioned the honour of being admitted into this house, which offers many attractions; its inhabitants enjoying the liberty of married women without the incumbrance of a husband, who may torment and contradict them. I will not become the echo of the reports and accusations which have been so often made against the chapters. Perfection cannot be expected in human institutions; all have their share of good and evil.

During my illness we lost the Baron Christian de Wimpffen, who had been made field-marshal the preceding year, inspector of the troops, and commander of St. Louis. He was an officer of distinguished merit, one whom my father esteemed highly, and who was deeply regretted. Colonel de Wimpffen, who had succeeded M. de Flachsland in the command of the regiment de Bouillon, was present at the interment, and appeared to be deeply affected. Baron Christian de Wimpffen possessed great influence during the ministry of M. de Saint Germain, of whom he may be called the right hand, for which reason he has been severely blamed for the ordinance that required from those who entered the regiments the same

proofs as from the pupils of the military school, that is to say, four degrees of nobility. This ordinance has been blamed as impolitic. M. de Wimpffen was not an Alsatian, he was a German of the Suabian circle ; his family was numerous, and his brothers served in Germany.

M. de Saint Germain, of whom I spoke awhile since, has been frequently judged by public opinion, and almost always unjustly. What I say on this subject may be relied on, my family connections having placed me in a position to know many things about this minister, whose intentions and talents have been, I venture to say, misunderstood.

Born in Franche Comté, near Lons-le-Saulnier, he quitted the French service, in which he held the rank of under-lieutenant, for that of the elector palatine, of Austria, Bavaria, and Russia. He re-entered France as field-marshal, and was engaged in the war of '56. In consequence of some differences with M. de Broglia, he suddenly entered the Danish service, and afterwards retired to Lauterbach in Alsace. He had lost his fortune by a bankruptcy in Hamburg. The German regiments subscribed for his use an income of sixteen thousand livres, until he received a pension from the king. He employed his time at Lauterbach in considerations on the military tactics of France, and the fruits of these labours he dedicated to M. de Maurepas, a

circumstance that brought him into notice, and was the cause of his being made minister.

M. de Saint Germain had the best intentions; he wished to reform abuses and to introduce stricter discipline into the army, but he did not possess the firmness necessary to carry his ideas into effect. From the first he yielded to the opinions of persons in power, and from that moment became incapable of realizing the good that he had contemplated. It was against his will that he entered into the ministry. M. de Maurepas advised Louis XVI. to give M. de Saint Germain the place which had become vacant by the death of Marshal du Muy. It was with difficulty that he was induced to accept office, and consented only when urged by the solicitations of his intimate friend, M. Dubois, *prêteur* de Schelstadt, and by his brother, the Abbé Dubois. He set out for Fontainebleau, and M. de Maurepas was so eager to present him to the king that he conducted him to his majesty's cabinet in his travelling dress, which was a coarse coat worn in his rustic excursions, and a round wig. M. de Saint Germain was not long a *lion;* he was found to be too sincere, and his place was given to the prince de Montbarrey, father of the princess of Nassau-Saarbruck, of whose marriage I have spoken.

Scarcely was I recovered, or at least convalescent,

than it was necessary to inform me of an event which overwhelmed us all with horror. The nephew of General Wurmser, our relative, had met a most tragical death, one deeply afflicting to those most nearly connected with him. He had been very wild and extravagant, had squandered his fortune, and frequented company so unfit for him and so disreputable, that his uncle thought himself obliged to obtain an order from the king, and put him into a place of confinement. Before being put into the citadel he was placed in a solitary prison of the abbey. Despair seized his soul, but a despair so calm and resigned in appearance, that the persons about him were deceived. The gaoler was moved to compassion by his lot, not that he was bribed, for the unhappy young man had no money, having been obliged to give up at his arrest the little that he still possessed; but he entreated so earnestly, and manifested so sincere a repentance, that he obtained all that he asked. The gaoler began by procuring him viands a little more delicate than those allowed. He afterwards went so far as to give him a knife and fork, which he very much desired. He had been denied every comfort and convenience, and it must be confessed that these measures were very severe. He had several times implored the clemency of his family, and of the king, but in vain; they were deaf to his prayers.

Frantic at being treated as a criminal, he determined to die, and with the dinner knife that he had obtained from the gaoler he inflicted on himself several dreadful wounds, and died in the arms of the turnkey, exhausted from loss of blood, before a physician could be brought. He wrote upon the wall a few lines, which I have never forgotten ; and had the Almighty made me mother of a son, and had he been led astray by the errors of youth, the lines traced by my unhappy cousin would have certainly regulated my conduct towards him. Poor Wurmser ! my heart aches in thinking of his fate. The following lines are a sad transcript of his sufferings :—

" I cannot brook dishonour, and the position in which my relatives have placed me is become insupportable. Their cruel severity will render me still more guilty, for I cannot endure the unjust treatment of which I am the victim. If they had appealed to my heart it would have responded to the voice of affection. I am about to die because I am forced to it ; I am about to expiate my faults in yielding up my life. I pardon those who are the cause of my death, as I beg of God to pardon me ; but cannot help regretting existence when I reflect that I might have been happier if I had been wiser, and that I might have repaired my faults, if I had not been placed in a position that rendered atonement impossible. Farewell to all

those I love; I do not say to those who love me, for there are none such. May heaven preserve them from despair, and spare them such sufferings as I have endured!"

M. d'Oberkirch and I were deeply afflicted, absolutely overcome with grief on reading these touching lines. The death of poor Wurmser made more noise than was agreeable to his family—the newspapers were full of it. We received from all parts compliments of condolence, with which we would willingly have dispensed. Our mourning, and it was really such, was combined with that of the family of Montbéliard, who lost within a short space of time two of their members. First, on the 7th of February '82, the wife of the Margrave Frederick Henry of Brandenburg-Schwadt, uncle to the princess. The deceased was a princess of Anhalt-Dessau, and had attained her sixty-sixth year. On the 7th of May of the same year died the duchess-dowager of Wurtemberg, a princess of Brandenburg-Schwadt, aunt by her mother to her royal highness, and widow of the royal heir of the elder branch, whose death was the cause of the duchy passing to the reigning branch. The dowager died in her eighty-first year.

The Grand-duchess Marie wore mourning for these relatives during some days immediately on her arrival in Paris.

CHAPTER IX.

Party before my departure—M. Lagensteeker—Officers of the Alsatian regiment—Departure—Dowager baroness of Oberkirch—The Catholic branch—M. de Butler and M. de Soettern—The Marquis of Talarn—Luneville—King Stanislaus—The gendarmes—Marshal Stainville—Prince Monaco—M. de Stainville and the regent—The Zuckmantels—The countess of Lenencourt—The *grands chevaux* of Lorraine—The second order of knighthood—M. Franck, the *great patriot*—The Helvetius family—The Andlaus—The countess of Ligneville—Nancy—Cathedral of Toul—The crabs—Naïveté of an innkeeper—The rock of Sisyphus—The custom-house officers—Chalons-sur-Marne—Champagne and Rhine wine—Paris—Princess Baratinski—Champigny—The marchioness de la Salle—The dresses of the countess du Nord—Supper with Baroness Hahn—I go to Fontainebleau to meet the countess du Nord.

I PASSED my last evening in Strasburg in my own house, in company with several officers of the regiment of Alsace, who had leave of absence. There was, in the first place, M. de Lagensteeker, commanding-colonel, one of the most ridiculous personages that I have ever known in my life. Very brave, very honourable, but inconceivably silly, believing himself, with the best faith in the world, to be *un homme à bonnes fortunes*, and convinced

that he was the sovereign arbiter of the destiny of every female heart within the circle of his acquaintance. On the day of which I speak he made the most touching lamentations about his not being able to go to Paris, where many a gentle heart sighed for his coming. Whilst speaking thus he was surrounded by young men, of whom almost every one was handsome, of noble appearance, and intellectual taste, but the worthy colonel fancied that he far outshone them all, as well by the graces of his mind as by the charms of his person. There were present, during this scene, baron de Gail and Baron Schauenbourg, captains; count de Reinach and count de Froberg, lieutenants; count de Mountureux, le chevalier de la Salle, baron de Wangen, sub-lieutenants—all serving under the orders of Colonel Lagensteeker, and all obliged, on that account, to listen in silence to his observations, but all laughing immoderately when his back was turned. We had also at this farewell meeting my cousin, Baron Waldner, who had just been appointed adjutant-major in the Swiss regiment de Waldner, at that time in garrison in Cherbourg. He set off next morning with the chevalier de Langalerie, an officer of the same corps. M. d'Oberkirch remarked, laughingly, that my drawing-room on that evening was a miniature barrack—all my guests were in military uniform.

We all wished each other a happy journey as we separated, and the next morning, at the break of day, we set out for Quatzenheim, where we were to pass the day, in order to arrange some affairs.

I was the happiest person in the world; I did not know how I could sufficiently thank M. d'Oberkirch for the pleasure he procured me. I did not close my eyes during the night I passed at Quatzenheim; and when morning came, I aroused the others, and we set off, my husband, I, and my *femme de chambre*, the excellent Schneider, that devoted being who, I hope, will never leave me. Schneider was not the least happy of the caravan, and plumed herself on the advantage she enjoyed over Madame Hendel, who, poor woman, was obliged to remain at Montbéliard, and who had almost fallen ill from vexation in thinking that she should not see the grand-duchess. We had beside in our suite two men servants. Our carriage, which could contain four persons, was excellent. We went with our own horses as far as Saarbourg, after having dined at Savern. My mother-in-law and my daughter accompanied us thus far. My mother-in-law, the dowager baroness d'Oberkirch, was at that time seventy-four years of age; and it was not without some vexation that I confided to her my dear Mary. She was very fond of her; but I dreaded her temper, which was extremely

disagreeable; I feared that the child might be frightened, and might become disheartened. Our two cousins, Messrs. Christian and Frederick d'Oberkirch, came also to pass some moments with us They came from Molsheim where they lived, and where they have a pretty house, in the fashion of a modern *château,* situated outside the city on the banks of the Bruche. These are the representatives of the Catholic branch. The entire family of Oberkirch had embraced Protestantism at the period of the Reformation; but my husband's great-grandfather abjured Protestantism on the 12th December '41, at the age of seventy-four, as did his second son, Frederick Leopold d'Oberkirch, captain in the regiment of Bernhold. He is the root of this branch. The Messrs. d'Oberkirch are then cousins-german of my husband, and have always been very friendly with us. Frederick is forty-five years old; he has served in the *gendarmes de la garde,* and afterwards as captain in the royal German cavalry.

I wept much in parting from my daughter, it was a real grief to me; and, but for my deep affection for the Grand-duchess Marie, I should have been tempted, in that sad moment, to renounce my journey. At length, M. d'Oberkirch hurried me away, although he was deeply affected himself I gave a thousand cautions, and made a

thousand entreaties to my mother-in-law, who always replied,

"Make your mind easy, my daughter."

This answer, constantly repeated, would have given me the vapours, if I had been a *petite maîtresse*. Schneider wept also, for which I was about to pick a quarrel with her;—she left no beloved child behind her. In passing through Phelsbourg, we met Madame de Soettern, Colonel and Madame de Butler, who were come thither expressly to see us. We remained more than a hour with them. The Butlers are relations of the family de Lort, with whom I am very intimate, and with Mademoiselle de la Salle, of whom I will speak hereafter. M. de Soettern is of the family of the celebrated Philip Christopher de Soettern, elector of Treves, who was carried off from his capital in 1639, and kept ten years in prison by the Spaniards, as a punishment for having placed himself under the protection of Louis XIII. This act of violence was one of the reasons of the war between France, Spain, and the emperor.

The marquis de Talarn, governor of Phelsbourg, does not reside there. This situation is worth twelve thousand livres annually. The marquis is also lieutenant-general, grand cross of St. Louis, and hereditary *maître d'hôtel* to the queen.

I was touched by the affection of my friends,

and would have wished to remain longer with them; but it was impossible. It had rained the entire day, the roads were very deep, a perfect sea of puddle as far as Saarbourg, where it was arranged that we should pass the night. I was very much fatigued from the effects of the first day's journey; and when I was obliged to resume my route at half-past five next morning, I found the order rather severe.

We had sent back our own horses and determined to travel post the remainder of the way. Six horses were put to our carriage, and we arrived in time for dinner at Luneville, a city of Lorraine, in which the good King Stanislaus resided so long. The *gendarmerie* are in garrison there, and this noble body of men is the sole military force in the country. They give laws to the citizens, and even to the nobility, and all that in the most graceful manner in the world. They are greatly beloved—some say too much so; one thing is, however, certain, that they find themselves very happy here. We walked in the gardens of the castle, which are handsome, though somewhat neglected.

We were to pass the night at Nancy, the capital of Lorraine, in the diocese of Toul. We stopped, a half league from the city, at M. de Stainville's (Choiseul) mansion of Malgrange. Lieutenant-general de Stainville was ten years governor of the

city of Strasburg, and commander-in-chief in Lorraine; he afterwards replaced the Marshal de Contades in his situation of governor, and was appointed maréchal of France precisely a month after our visit. His daughter had married, in the preceding April, Prince Joseph of Monaco, second son of the sovereign prince of that name. The eldest, duke de Valentinois, became, several years after, the husband of Mdlle. d'Aumont. The maréchal was fond of relating the following anecdote:

His grandfather, minister plenipotentiary of the duke of Lorraine, at the court of the regent, was one day met by this prince, at the moment when he was furiously excited against the duke, of whose conduct he thought he had reason to complain. He became still warmer as he spoke, as was customary with him, and at length went so far as to say—

"I really believe, M. de Stainville, that your master means to trifle with me."

"Monseigneur," replied M. de Stainville, proudly, "the duke, my master, has not commissioned me to inform your royal highness."

Mesdames de Zuckmantel and de Bernhold (the latter was a relative of mine) were staying at Malgrange, and it was for them especially that my visit was intended. Madame de Zuckmantel, widow of General Zuckmantel, *cordon rouge* was

cousin to the ancient ambassador of this name. The Zuckmantels are one of the oldest and most influential families of Lower Alsace, and can claim kindred with a princess-abbess de Saint Odile of the sixteenth century. Madame de Zuckmantel lives in Paris during the winter, where she keeps a very brilliant establishment. I had not seen her for a long time, and we were delighted to meet again. We found also at Malgrange the countess de Lenoncourt, the countess de Man, and Madame Franck, the *Ammeister*. All these persons received us with marks of the warmest friendship, and gave us interesting accounts of the fêtes given at the Hôtel de Ville at Paris, in honour of the birth of the dauphin. All congratulated me upon my journey to Paris, where I had reason to expect so much pleasure. I took little part in the conversation, my impatience to reach the end of my journey was too great to allow me to give much attention to what was going on around. I was so preoccupied with the desire of beholding my dear princess, that I would not wish to delay a moment *en route*.

The nobility of Lorraine is very numerous, many of whom bear titles peculiar to this duchy. The four principal families are called *les grands chevaux* (the great horses). These are—

D'Harancourt, Lenoncourt, Ligneville, du Châ-

telet. The next branch of the nobility consists of those branches that descend in the female line, and are entitled to rank with those already mentioned. They are—

Stainville, Ludre, Saffre, d'Hausonville, Lanebertée, Gournay, Fiquelmont, d'Durches, Helmstadt, Marle, Mauléon, Mercy, Hunolstein.

These high families furnish canonesses to the chapters of Lorraine, where there are several. They seldom come to the court of France, and scarcely look upon themselves as French. Madame de Lenoncourt had been a widow for more than thirty years, and was a very handsome old lady, whose sole cause of vexation was that she had no children.

In default of male heirs the name of Lenoncourt has been assumed by the family of Soublet d'Hendicourt. Madame de Lenoncourt doated on Madame Franck, the wife of the *Ammeister* of Strasburg, who came to visit her every morning, without which attention she would have felt wretched during the day. This title of *Ammeister* is borne by the chief of the petty council (which is that of the citizens) of the city. M. Franck was one of the best men in the world, and maintained the old republican notions of Strasburg independence. The cause of his installation into the functions of *Ammeister* is sufficiently strange to merit being recorded.

His predecessor had given in his resignation in consequence of some discussions with the *prêteur-royal*, and no person could be found to fill the office of *Ammeister*. The speeches and writings of M. Franck had made him popular with the humbler classes; and as he had said publicly that no good citizen could refuse the office of *Ammeister*, or decline taking his seat in the council even though he were dying, he was taken at his word, and appointed. It so happened that he was very ill at the time; the populace rushed in crowds to his house, obliged him to quit his bed, and carried him in triumph through the street, crying out—

"Long live the great patriot!"

This scene nearly cost him his life, but acquired him for ever this flattering title, though I strongly suspect that he repented a little of the warmth that urged him to put forth such dangerous maxims; and I believe that he would have preferred not being so *great a patriot* at the price that he paid for his honours. One thing is, however, certain; that he was more cautious ever after, and never again harangued his fellow-citizens upon the imperative obligation of discharging civic duties. How numerous are these Utopian patriots, who falter when they are called upon to put their principles into practice!

Madame de Man, whom we also met at M. de

Stainville's, was daughter to M. Helvetius, the queen's physician, and sister to the countess d'Andlau. M. Helvetius, all *fermier-général* as he was, had married Mdlle. de Ligneville, who had nothing, and who made a low match for the sake of money. The countess de Man was at that time on a visit with her sister the countess d'Andlau, niece to the baron d'Andlau, who lived at Colmar, and had married the mother of Madame de Genlis. The counts d'Andlau are two brothers. One commanded the regiment of the Royal Lorraine cavalry, and was afterwards plenipotentiary at Brussels. The Andlaus established in Lorraine are a branch of the d'Andlaus of Alsace; so numerous and extensive is this family. The title borne by the head of the house is—Chief of the four hereditary knights of the holy Roman empire. His arms are quartered with an imperial mantle.

We passed the entire day at Malgrange. They wished to keep us there for the evening, but we preferred returning to Nancy, where we were to meet my brother-in law, who was captain in the Berchigny hussars, garrisoned at Saint-Mihel, and who came on purpose to see us. This is my husband's youngest brother; his wife is a Rathsamhausen.

Before entering the city we stopped at Nôtre Dame de Bon Secours, as we wished to visit the

tombs of the king and queen of Poland, who are buried in this chapel. The mausoleums are of white marble, on which are beautifully-sculptured gracefully-arranged groups of allegorical figures. That good king Stanislaus has left many touching remembrances in this country; he was adored by all around, and deservedly, for he did an immensity of good. I was penetrated with deep emotion whilst standing before that tomb; I reflected that all must die, however beloved, however powerful; and I pondered deeply on the folly of attaching ourselves to the things of this world, where we are to pass so short a time.

My brother-in-law awaited us, and it was with great pleasure that we met him. All along our route had we received testimonies of sincere affection: ours was indeed a journey of love. We went out to see the new city, which is very handsome, and very well built. La Place Carrière and la Place Royale are very fine. La Pepinière is a charming promenade, where we met many persons of quality, who were delighted to see us. We received as many invitations as would have kept us two weeks at Nancy, had we accepted them all. M. d'Oberkirch met, amongst others, two counts de Ligneville that he had formerly known; one, captain of a vessel, who had married a Miss Count, the other, sub-lieutenant in the royal guards, a very hand-

some man, much admired by the ladies, and who appeared to be in the style of the colonel of Alsace.

The city of Nancy appeared to be a very agreeable place of residence. There was a large number of nobility, a great display of magnificence, exquisite dresses, and gallant officers, amongst whom the gendarmerie of Luneville held an honourable place; however, I do not know whether I would not prefer Strasburg. We are, it is true, less elegant and more grave, but we are, it appears to me, more dignified and more consistent in our principles. It is very easy to be honest and virtuous in a country like Alsace, where the temptations to err are few, where a spirit of severe morality reigns, and where public opinion condemns the slightest indiscretion; but at Nancy, as at Paris, and as at court, society is quite different; pleasures and gallantry form the sole occupation of the fashionable world, and grave, steady people are looked upon as prudes. There is under such an influence a certain laxity of word and action, which, though I do not say that it is vice, yet borders upon it, and may give ground for suspicion. Whilst speaking thus I am well aware that appearances are deceitful, and that before forming an opinion in any case, one should maturely consider all the circumstances, and, as the wise man said,

turn them *seven times* in one's head. It is so that I would wish to act.

We left Nancy on Saturday the 14th of May, at ten in the morning. The weather was delightful. We travelled quickly, the roads were good, not so good, however, as those of Alsace. My brother-in-law stayed at Nancy, where an invitation to a dinner party delayed him. We passed on to Toul, where we only stopped long enough to change horses, and to visit the cathedral. It is a superb Gothic edifice. We were particularly struck by one chapel, which was literally of *stone-lace.* I love these ancient churches, and can well comprehend the effect produced on the minds of Catholics by these grand buildings, with their dim light and lofty arches, where sound is mellowed into sonorous sweetness.

We dined at Void, a little borough in the diocese of Toul. I remarked, with astonishment, that in the little road-side inn where we stopped the cooking was excellent, though the house was frequented only by the humbler classes. We got excellent crabs, as large as lobsters; I have never seen any as good, even on the tables of princes. M. d'Oberkirch amused himself by making our host come up, that he might pay him a compliment. He came, cap in hand, scraping with his left foot, which is a manner of salutation peculiar to the

peasants of Lorraine, and which our worthy host performed in a most comical manner.

"Where do you get such fine crabs?" asked I. "You rear them yourself, I suppose?"

"Oh, no, madam, we would not be able to do that; they would eat us at last."

I thought the *naïveté* of the reply admirable, and M. d'Oberkirch laughed outright.

We passed the night at St. Dizier, in Champagne. This is a dreary and uninteresting country. St. Dizier is a nasty little town, where one sees nothing but detestable inns. I did not close my eyes during the night I passed there. I was kept awake by an assembly of carters, who had taken their station beneath my window, and were endeavouring to load a cart with an enormous bale, which continually rolled back, like the rock of Sisyphus. They expended on this occasion a quantity of words and oaths that would have excused their keeping silence for a fortnight after.

The next morning, before our departure, the custom-house officers made a feint of going through the ceremony of searching us. Their eyes were scarcely open, for it appeared that, on the previous evening, these gentlemen had indulged in a debauch, a quantity of wine seized from a smuggler having furnished the means. They scarcely opened our trunks, to the great delight of the worthy

Schneider, who was very anxious to give them something to drink.

"Oh, they have drunk too much," said M. d'Oberkirch, "leave them alone."

"On the contrary, my dear," replied I, "they have only just drunk enough; a little more and they would have been quarrelsome, a little less, and they would have been cross, and insisted on searching everything."

These gentlemen carried their politeness so far as to assist our servants to replace the portmanteaus and trunks, and we gave them at last, in recompense for so many attentions, the means of resuming the occupation of the previous evening. I have no doubt but that they drank our health, and that of the smuggler, with all the honours.

On the 15th we stopped to refresh ourselves at Chalons-sur-Marne, the capital of Champagne; I should not much like to live in this city. I thought the air very bad. I hope I may be allowed to make this remark without offending anybody, as my censure is directed exclusively against the walls. We slept at Dormans, another little city of Champagne; we were very much fatigued when we arrived. It had rained incessantly from the time we left St. Dizier; the roads were abominable; and though our carriage was excellent, I was jolted almost to death.

It was a pity that the weather was so bad, for this portion of Champagne, all along the Marne, is very beautiful. One sees on every side luxuriant corn-fields and vineyards, handsome domains and country-houses, and superb plantations. We were not able to enjoy this lovely prospect, for we were obliged to keep the carriage windows closed on account of the rain which beat sharply in our faces.

We got on in this fashion to Epernay, which may be considered the capital of that part of Champagne, where the best wine is grown. We wished to taste it in its native soil; and, though my taste may be condemned as barbarous, I must confess that I prefer our wines of Alsace and those from the banks of the Rhine.

On the 16th we arrived at Meaux, the capital of Upper Brie, a large city peopled with merchants, but also very muddy and very black. It is in this neighbourhood that the celebrated cheeses are manufactured, which take their name from the province. They are sent to all parts of Europe; we have often had them at Strasburg.

At length we got a glimpse of the great capital, and soon after entered it. There is nothing striking in the first view of Paris, but the bustle, the crowds, the continual movement. The districts that I traversed did not seem to me more beautiful than our provincial towns. One should abide in Paris to

learn to appreciate it. We alighted at my uncle's, the count de Waldner, who lived in the Chausée d'Antin, and who gave us possession of his apartments, being at the time in the country with his wife. We found everything very comfortable, and I made myself at once quite at home.

As soon as I awoke next morning, I was presented with a letter from Madame de Beckendorf, who was accompanying the countess du Nord in her tour. She prayed me, on the part of the princess, to go with M. d'Oberkirch as far as Fontainebleau to meet her. This kindness of the countess du Nord touched me deeply, and I immediately replied that I would obey her wishes, which I did with all imaginable delight.

I had scarcely finished my note, when Prince Baratinsky, the Russian minister, was announced. He came also in the name of my dear princess to speak to me of her journey, to tell me all the places where she had stopped, how she was, that she was not at all fatigued from travelling, and that she was longing to see me. By this it will be seen that no person could be more affectionate than this adorable Princess Marie was to me.

The following day the Prince Baratinsky set off for Fontainebleau to meet their imperial highnesses. I was fully resolved to do the like, and the prospect of so soon meeting the princess filled me with joy.

Prince Baratinsky was, like all the Russians of the court of Catherine, a very distinguished man. His manners were very elegant, and I can assure you that there was nothing of the Goth or Sarmatian about him.

Our next visitor was the baroness de Hahn, of whom I have already spoken, whose husband was colonel *attaché* in the regiment of Anhalt. She was to return next day to Strasburg. I sent by her a thousand tendernesses to my daughter, and my respects to my mother-in-law, who was very generally respected in the family, though little loved. Her temper was terrific, though her heart was good; but to live with her would be an impossibility. Still my daughter was happy during her stay with her, and I had no cause to regret having confided her to the care of her grandmother.

After this visit we went to bed very much fatigued, very much agitated; we could scarcely sleep, as is generally the case when one is excited.

17*th May*.—We rose early, and set out for Champagny, where my uncle, the count de Waldner, lived; we wished to pay him our respects. He had purchased in this place a very pretty country-house, where he lived the greater part of the year. He received us with open arms, as if were his own children. My dear uncle was so changed that I was affected even to tears. The poor man could

scarcely hold himself upright; it was necessary to help him to go from his arm-chair to his bed. His mental faculties seemed to have yielded, like his physical, to the pressure of old age. This was a melancholy spectacle, particularly when I remembered what he had been. I left after dinner, my heart saddened by what I had beheld. The fatigues of a military life had no doubt contributed more than age to this mournful change.

On returning to Paris we paid a visit to the marchioness de la Salle, whose husband commanded as deputy-lieutenant-general in Alsace. He was a man of talent; the wife is more common-place, though she has mixed as much in the fashionable world as any woman in France. She has two sons, one of whom has entered the army, the other is still a child.* Madame de la Salle was of the family of Clermont Chaste, and her mother was a Demoiselle de Butler.

On leaving Madame de la Salle I went to make a visit, exclusively feminine, to Madame Bertin, the celebrated milliner of the queen. I had been commissioned to call to inquire whether the dresses of the grand-duchess were ready. The entire esta-

* Le chevalier de Caillebot de Lasalle, aide-de-camp to the count d'Artois, afterwards Charles X. He came to Strasburg in 1814 as commissary extraordinary from the king.

blishment was at work for her imperial highness. Nothing was to be seen but damasks, dauphines, embroidered satins, brocades, and laces. The ladies of the court came to see them through curiosity, but it was forbidden to make the like dresses for any person until the princess had first worn hers. Madame Bertin seemed to me a very odd kind of person, inflated with the idea of her own importance, and treating princesses as her equals. There is an anecdote told of her which I believe to be true. A provincial lady came one day to order a head-dress for her presentation. The milliner eyed her from head to foot: the result of her observations must have been satisfactory, for she turned with a majestic air towards one of her assistants, and said—

"Show this lady the result of my last conference with her majesty."

The baroness de Hahn set out the same evening she had made us promise to sup with her, which on our part we were very willing to do, as it would bring us so far on our way to Fontainebleau, where we were to meet the countess du Nord. Unfortunately we could not get post horses for any price. M. d'Oberkirch sent, and went himself through all Paris, but in vain. I could have wept! We were obliged to be satisfied to wait until next day. It was settled that our hired horses should bring us as

far as possible on the way to meet their imperial highnesses. I could not go to bed, I passed a greater part of the night in writing to the princess de Montbéliard. My heart was so full that I could only commune with her. I was transported with joy and impatience. I was about to behold again this beloved friend, this charming princess, who, since our childhood, had deigned to call me sister, and I was to behold her at the acme of happiness and of glory. Thus were my most ardent wishes accomplished.

"Ah! madame," said I to her august mother, "I envied your happiness a little while since, it is now your turn to envy mine."

18*th May.*—The next day in effect we set out, travelled three posts quickly, and arrived at Fontainebleau, where we waited from nine until two the arrival of the carriages.

CHAPTER X.

Arrival of the countess du Nord—Affectionate interview—Goodness of the countess du Nord—The marchioness of Bombelles—Her family—Madame Thavanet—Madame de Louvois—Follies of M. de Louvois—Strange anecdote—Mademoiselle Colombe—Crowd at the Russian embassy—Description of the count du Nord—M. and Madame Beckendorf—Prince Kourakin—Generosity of the countess du Nord—Procession of the *blue ribbons*—The countess Skawronski—The countess Zoltikoff—General Wurmser—The Russian Court at Versailles—Baroness Mackan—Prince Baratinsky—Presentation of the count and countess du Nord—Timidity of Louis XVI.—The count du Nord visits the dauphin—The countess of Vergennes—The royal family—The high officers of the crown—Marshal Duras—Prince Beauvau—Marshal Biron—The countess of Provence—The countess of Artois—Concert at court—The queen dispenses with the ceremony of my presentation—Her majesty addresses me several times—Legros—Madame Mara—Supper at Madame Mackan's—Politeness of the count du Nord—The opera—Conflagration—Theatre at the Porte St. Martin—Rondo—Accident—Goodness of the countess du Nord—Presentiment—Petit Trianon—The queen of Golconda—M. de Monsigny—Supper at Princess Chinay's—Her monkey—The flower-girls of the Pont Neuf—Prisoners of "La Force"—The king's reprimand to M. St. Louis—The royal children of France—The wives of the Crown ministers—M. de Maurepas—Tastes of Louis XVI.—The dukes of Aumont and Villequier—

The duchess of Villeroy—M. de la Harpe—The princess of Bouillon—The duchess of Bouillon and Mademoiselle Lecouvreur—The countess of Halwill—The viscountess of Equevilly—The Vautrait—The jargon of fashion.

AT length we heard the sound of wheels, the cracking of the postilions' whips, the neighing of horses, and in another moment the carriage appeared, and we had all descended into the road. The grand-duchess put her head out of the carriage and waved her handkerchief the moment she perceived me. The grand-duke alighted and came to meet me, greeting me with the politeness and kindness of an intimate friend. But my dear princess, she overwhelmed me with caresses and endearments. It was one of the happiest moments of my life: my heart beat with inexpressible and delightful emotion. We remained locked in each others arms for almost five minutes.

"My best, my dearest Lanele," said she, "how delighted I am to see you again!"

"And what must I feel?"

After this short interview we returned to Paris in the suite of their imperial highnesses, and had the honour of accompanying them to their hôtel. Here I found again my beloved Princess Dorothea, as simple, as good, as confiding as she had been at Montbéliard She presented me again to the grand-duke, saying—

"She is a dear sister to me, and I beg of you to love her as you do the other two."

I was touched almost to tears, and the grand-duke, whose affection for his august spouse made him participate in all her feelings, was deeply moved as he kissed my hand. The countess du Nord then spoke to me of her children, of whom she was idolatrously fond.

"Although I hear by every post of my dear children, Alexander and Constantine, I feel the time very long that I am separated from them. Ah! my dear Lanele, my heart is divided into many parts; it is a sad attendant upon us princesses that we can never have around us at one time all those we love. And my goddaughter, why have you not brought her? I would be so delighted to embrace her."

We had so much to say to each other, so many things to speak of—our husbands, our families, everything that had happened since we parted. I was very anxious to hear something about the Empress Catherine, and the countess du Nord was not sparing in her information. We were often interrupted (for it rained visits and compliments), but spite of all we made considerable progress in our confidential communications, by always taking up the thread of our conversation where it had been broken off. How pleasantly the time passed

away as we merrily related our various adventures amid peals of laughter, whose gaiety seemed even an echo of that of childhood.

The grand-duchess's suite was magnificently lodged. Madame Beckendorf had a very pretty apartment, into which I had retired to rest myself for a few moments before supper, when the marchioness de Bombelles, lady-in-waiting to Princess Elizabeth, sister to the king, came in search of me. This Madame Bombelles is a very amiable person. Her husband has succeeded his father-in-law, Baron Mackan, as minister of the king at the general diet of the empire, and is seignior of the fiefs of Worck and Ackenheim, in Alsace. Her father-in-law, Count Bombelles, who holds a commission in the French guards, is marshal-de-camp, lieutenant-general of the royal armies, and commander of the castle and town of Bitche, on the frontiers of German Lorraine and of Sarre.

Two daughters of the Bombelles* family are mar-

* M. de Bombelles, brother of Mesdames Thavanet and Louvois, French ambassador at Vienna, became a bishop after the death of his wife. He had one daughter, Madame Casteja, in the suite of the dauphiness, and three sons who were reared in Austria, and became naturalized Austrians. Two of these were made ambassadors. The second eldest educated the present emperor. One of them was married to her majesty Maria Louisa with the consent of the Austrian court.

ried, one to the marquis of Thavanet, the other to the marquis of Louvois, who had formerly borne the title of Chevalier de Louvre. I am very intimate with Madame Thavanet, for whom I feel the greatest friendship, and with whom I constantly correspond. She is one of the best, the wittiest, and the most charming woman of my acquaintance. It is she who has composed the song of 'Pauvre Jacques,' of which the words and air are both so touching. She had been for some time lady-in-waiting to Princess Elizabeth.

As to Madame Louvois, she was very young, at the time of which I write, having been presented only the winter before. She was the fourth wife of M. de Louvois. His first had been Mademoiselle Loguy, who lived but a few years after her marriage. His second, baroness Wrienzen d'Hoffel, a lady from Holland. He was very extravagant, a fact that was very well known, but which did not alarm the baroness. She said to him in a very agreeable manner as they were returning from church, that she hoped he would be wiser for the future.

"I assure you, madam," said he, "that I have committed my last folly."

Short as was the married life of the baroness, she had many opportunities of contradicting this assertion. He had a mania for marrying. After

the death of the baroness he married the Countess Reichenberg, whose reign was shorter than that of either of her predecessors, as she survived the marriage ceremony but a few months. I know not whether this château contained *Blue Beard's closet*, but I am certain that Mademoiselle de Bombelles showed a great deal of courage in consenting to become his fourth wife.

M. de Louvois had been very wild in his youth, and spent his money with marvellous facility. His father, irritated by his extravagance, refused to supply him with the means of continuing his disorderly career; and his credit being quite exhausted, he was forced to return, like the Prodigal Son, to the paternal château. He arrived unencumbered by a second coat. A large party had been invited to dinner; but as our hero expected the company to be rather stupid, he wished not to appear, giving his toilet as an excuse.

"Monsieur," said his father, "I will expect you to join this dinner party."

"I should feel much pleasure, but you see it is impossible!—this coat——"

"Wear another."

"I have not got it."

"You have not one! after spending sixty thousand livres with tailors and embroiderers."

"That would have been a very good reason for-

merly, but it is no *longer* so. They are all worn out."

"Get one."

"Monsieur, that is easily said, but to get a coat one must have money; and—at this moment——"

"What! after borrowing two hundred thousand livres from usurers?"

"Mon Dieu! monsieur, I do not mean to contradict you, but the crowns have followed the coats."

M. de Louvois raised his eyes and arms to heaven, uttered an exclamation of anger, and left the room: he turned when he got to the door, and said—

"I will not enter into a discussion on your extravagance, monsieur; but I will say that I desire to see you at my table on the appointed day, and that I forbid you to appear there in the coat you now wear."

The chevalier was stunned—embarrassed; he knew not what do. The paternal mandate was positive, and he had no hope of future assistance from his father if he did not obey him now. He called his valet, a second Scapin, and they put all their wits to work to find some means of getting out of this dilemma; but in vain, human invention seemed unequal to the task. The chevalier was distracted; he paced his chamber in dismay, when,

casting his eyes upon the hangings (which represented the marriage procession of Alexander and Statira), a sudden thought struck him.

"Ah!" said he, "I know what I will do. Go into the village, and bring me the tailor, with all his implements, immediately; and tell him to prepare himself to spend the night here."

"But, M. le Chevalier——"

"Go immediately, and do not reply."

When the valet had left the room, he proceeded, with the greatest coolness, to take down the curtains off his bed, and laying them on a table, marked out the figures he admired most. The tailor was brought.

"Come, my man," said he, "you must make a coat, vest, and culotte out of this; be sure to choose the handsomest ladies for the front, and this high priest, with his long beard, will do very well for the back."

The valet and the tailor thought, and with very good reason, that their young master was losing his senses, but he was so determined that they were obliged to obey.

The suit was finished in time and fitted extremely well; the chevalier was very well pleased, and, having completed his toilet, descended to the dining-room, which he entered with an imperturbable countenance. He was received with shouts

of laughter. His father was very angry; but this public disgrace obliged him to open his purse for his extravagant heir, who with fresh funds returned to Paris.

He became very intimate with Mademoiselle Colombe, an actress at the Italian comedy; and in a transport of gratitude he one day asked her what he could do that would give her pleasure.

"Send me some chatons" (precious stones) said she, "to make a necklace." Next day she received a box full of little cats (which are also called chatons). This jest was equally well received at court and in the green-room, which unfortunately are beginning to have only too many things in common; some fresh amusement soon succeeded, and this refined witticism forgotten.

We must now return to our illustrious travellers. Their residence was at the hôtel of the Russian ambassador, formerly the Hôtel de Levi, at the corner of the Rue de Grammont, and of the old boulevard. At their arrival they were received by a crowd of respectable persons, and overwhelmed with compliments and congratulations: they saluted every person without distinction. For several days their hôtel was surrounded by an immense concourse constantly crying out—

"Long live the count and countess du Nord!"

Lest there should be any disturbance, an exempt was stationed in their hôtel, and under their immediate authority.

The count du Nord was at that time twenty-eight, having been born on the 1st of October 1754. His first appearance was not prepossessing. He was very small, and his face would be considered plain even amongst the northern races; but on a nearer view, his features revealed an expression of intelligence and refinement, his eyes were brilliant and animated, and, notwithstanding the astute smile that played about his lips, his countenance wore an habitual air of calmness and repose.

The countess du Nord had become one of the most beautiful women in the world. She had grown a little taller since she left us, and her figure was of the most perfect proportions, she moved with a grace and dignity which I have never seen equalled except by our own lovely queen. I need give no further description of this charming princess, who has long since become well known to every reader.

Besides her lady-in-waiting and another lady of her suite, the countess du Nord was accompanied by the Baroness Beckendorf, her most intimate friend next to me. Colonel Beckendorf was in the suite of the grand-duke. His father had ren-

dered the name of Beckendorf illustrious by his services during the seven years' war. It was he who commanded the cavalry which decided the fate of the battle of Kollin, in which Frederick II. was vanquished.

The count was also accompanied by Prince Kourakin, his friend and companion since childhood. He was very much attached to him, and scarcely ever went out without him. This Prince Kourakin was not by any means a *northern barbarian* in his air or manner. On the contrary, he eclipsed many of our Parisian *élégans* at Versailles.

At Lyons, the countess du Nord had the happiness of meeting her beloved parents and one of her brothers, and of enjoying their delightful society during her entire stay in that city. They accompanied her as far as Dijon, from whence they returned to Montbéliard. Still she was not satisfied; she complained that they had been forced to leave her too soon, that she had not had time to say half that she wished. Her thoughts were ever with her family; and often amidst the allurements of Paris has she heaved a sigh for the home of her childhood; so ineffaceable are the affections of our youth.

The count du Nord had found amongst the guards at Lyons a Russian of good family, who had been obliged to leave his country in conse-

quence of a false accusation which had been brought against him there. The prince, delighted to find a compatriot so far from home, immediately bought him out of the service, and, presenting him with fifty louis, said that at his return to St. Petersburgh he would not forget him. The count himself told us of this adventure, and added, his eyes dim with emotion—

"So great is the love I bear my country, that my greatest ambition would be to make all her children happy, and to be the deserving object of their affections."

What grace do not such sentiments add to the dignity of a great prince!

19*th May*.—I was obliged to rise at six o'clock to get my hair dressed, so great was the demand for hair-dressers. I went very early to see the countess du Nord, with whom I had a long conversation in private. I went home to dress, and then returned to dine with the princess. The fashionable hour for dinner was two o'clock. We had no strangers. I found the princess lying down to rest, and the prince had gone incognito to Versailles, where he heard mass, and had been present at the procession of the blue ribbons, that is to say, of the knights of the order of the Holy Ghost, a procession which had been instituted by Louis XIII. He returned delighted with the magnificence of

Versailles, the graceful dresses, the elegance of the arrangements, and above all, the exquisite beauty of the queen. The grand-duchess was a little disturbed by his praises of her majesty, but she was soon reassured by the affectionate smiles of her beloved husband.

After dinner the countess requested me to order my carriage, and visit some Russian ladies who were then at Paris. Countess Skawronski, Countess Bruce, both *dames à portrait*, that is, who were entitled to wear on their left sides, like the cross of a canoness, a miniature of the empress set in diamonds. This was considered a very high honour. Countess Skawronski, who was a relation of Prince Potemkim, was as lovely as a dream. Countess Zoltikoff, a lady of great gentleness and intelligence; she had two daughters, one of whom was extremely handsome. After paying a visit to the countess of Thavanet, I returned to sup with the count and countess du Nord. The time passed delightfully. The count related all that he had seen or heard during the morning; his observations were very shrewd. He showed the sagacity of an old courtier in divining what was passing behind the scenes.

It was half-past eleven when I got home, but I was too happy to feel fatigue. I found my cousin, General Wurmser, waiting for me, not having been able to see me during the day, though he called

several times. He had formerly been colonel of the Alsatian regiment, and became afterwards lieutenant-general and grand cross of the order of military merit, and inspector-general of German regiments. He generally resides at Paris. He was this year reposing himself from the fatigues of service. He was a most amiable old man, and loved us all very much.

20*th May.*—This was a great day. The count and countess du Nord, and all the Russian court, were to appear at Versailles. The Russian court comprised their imperial highnesses, their suite, the embassy, and, in some sense, myself.

We set out early. I went in the grand-duchess's carriage. She was magnificently attired; she wore a dress of brocade, richly embroidered with pearls, which hung in graceful folds over a large hoop; her jewels were the most beautiful I ever saw. I thought she never looked so lovely. The grand-duke and I could do nothing but admire her.

"Am I as handsome as the queen?" she asked her husband, archly.

Being French I could not be presented with their imperial highnesses; I therefore retired to the apartments of the Baroness Mackan, under-governess of the royal children of France. Her husband, who is an Alsatian, had been, as I have before related, royal minister at the diet of the

empire. Our families had always been very intimate. Madame de Mackan, *née* de Ficte de Souey, for whom I feel a very high esteem, is a very distinguished person. Her son, lieutenant-colonel of dragoons, with his wife (Mdlle. Alissan de Chazet*) were presented in '81. The Mackans are related to the Bernhausens, a high German family.

The count du Nord was accompanied during his presentation to their majesties and the royal family by Prince Baratinsky, the czarina's ambassador. The king received him in his cabinet. He was announced by M. de Sequeville, usher to the ambassadors, and presented in form by M. Live, whose office it was to introduce them. The two princes saluted each other with much warmth of manner. The count said—

"It gives me great pleasure, Sire, to see your majesty; it was the principal object of my visit to France. The empress, my mother, will envy me this happiness, for in that, as in everything, our sentiments are the same."

Louis XVI. is very timid, and always a little embarrassed by ceremonials, though custom must have made them familiar to him. He replied to this compliment with some vague phrases. The grand-duke thought this first interview very cool.

* The mother of M. de Mackan, admiral and baron, is Madame de Mackan, *née* de Chazet.

He then presented two letters to the king, one from Naples, the other from Parma. His next visit was to the dauphin, whom he embraced with much affection, and admired for his beauty. This was the eldest dauphin, whom we have lost since. His imperial highness addressed many questions to the Princess Guéménée, governess of the august child, to which she replied with the dignity and prudence which always characterised her.

"Madame," said the count du Nord, "often remind the dauphin of the visit that he has received today, and of the attachment that I vow to him from his cradle, and which I hope will be the pledge of the alliance and eternal union of our kingdoms."

These words were repeated to everybody at Versailles, and admired for their wisdom and grace. Their majesties were delighted.

In the meanwhile the Countess Vergennes, wife of the minister for foreign affairs, presented the countess du Nord to the queen and royal princesses. The queen was charming, gracious, and affable; she received the countess as if she had known her all her life, inquiring minutely what were her tastes, and what she could do that would give her pleasure. She requested her to visit her frequently. The grand-duchess made suitable replies to these courteous expressions. She came away delighted with our sovereign.

The royal family consisted at that time of

Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette of Austria.
Madame Adelaide, } The king's aunts.
Madame Victoria, }
Madame Louisa, a Carmelite nun at the convent of St. Denis.
The count of Provence, the king's brother.
The countess of Provence.
The count of Artois.
The countess of Artois.
The dauphin.
The princess royal, the king's daughter.
The duke of Angoulême, } Sons of the count of Artois.
The duke of Berry, }
Madame Elizabeth, the king's sister.

The high offices of the crown were filled by

Cardinal Rohan, grand almoner.
Prince Condé, grand master of France, and of the king's household.
The duke of Bourbon, *en survivance.*
Prince Rohan-Guéménée, high chamberlain.
The duke of Bouillon, *en survivance.*
Prince Lambèse, master of the horse.
The duke of Brissac, grand pantler.
The marquis of Verneuil, cupbearer.
The duke of Penthièvre, grand huntsman.
The count of Vaudreuil, grand falconer.
The count of Flamarens, *grand louvetin* (wolf-hunter).
The duke of Penthièvre, admiral of France.
The marquis of Suze, grand marshal of the Court.
The marquis of Sourches, grand provost of France.
The marquis of Tourzel, *en survivance* (hereditary).
M. de Maupeon, high chancellor.
M. Hue de Miromesnil, keeper of the seals.

The Marshal Duras was first gentleman of the bedchamber for the year 1782.

The prince of Beauvau and the prince of Poix were captains of the guard, by hereditary right, for the April quarter.

After seeing their majesties and the princes, the count and countess du Nord returned to their palace, where they received several visits and presentations. Amongst others came Marshal Biron, who presented the officers of the French guards. The grand-duke expressed great admiration for these military gentlemen.

The Russian court dined with the royal family of France. During dinner the king was more at his ease than he had been at the presentation, and consequently more affable. The queen was, as before, amiable and affectionate. The countess of Provence was also present; she was not handsome, but had very beautiful eyes, and her conversation was brilliant and gay, without the slightest shade of malice; a combination that is very rare, particularly at court. Her younger sister, the countess of Artois, was small, gentle, ingenuous, and possessed many very admirable qualities. Her complexion was beautiful, but her nose a little long.

The grand-duchess shone at this dinner, and displayed an intelligence and tact very uncommon at her age. The etiquette observed at public receptions at court is so fatiguing and wearisome to princes that I do not know how they can ever

become reconciled to it. After dinner the entire court assembled in the saloon *de la paix*, where there was to be a concert. There were places in the gallery for persons who had been presented, but had not received invitations from the queen. The palace was all brilliantly illuminated, as on days of high ceremonial. A thousand chandeliers depended from the ceilings, and every bracket supported a branch holding forty wax-lights. The effect was magical. It would be impossible to give an adequate description of the splendour and richness of the decorations, of the magnificence of the dresses, or of the matchless beauty of the queen, who lent a grace and charm to everything around her.

Her majesty was told that I had the honour of being the intimate friend of the grand-duchess, but that, not being a Russian, I could not be presented with her. She immediately sent me an invitation to her concert, and whilst we were at dinner, a lady of the court called on me to say that the queen would dispense with the ceremony of my presentation.

"Madame," said the queen to the countess du Nord, "it would have been a strange oversight in me to have separated you from your friend at the very moment that I was seeking to surround you with everything that could give you pleasure."

Her majesty received me with excessive goodness and amiability, and said—

"Madame, I do not know which I ought to envy most, you the friendship of the countess du Nord, or her the possession of so faithful a friend, as I understand you to be."

Never shall these words be effaced from my remembrance, nor the gentle glance by which they were accompanied.

The queen made me sit behind her and the countess du Nord, between madame de Beckendorf and madame de Vergennes, and did me the honour of addressing me five or six times during the concert.

"You come from a province, baroness, that I thought very beautiful and very loyal when I passed through it. I never can forget that I was there first greeted by the French; that it was there they first called me their queen."

She asked me, a little while after, how many children I had, and when I replied that I had but one daughter, she said—

"It is a pity that you have not a son; but I hope that you will have one, as I am sure that he would serve the king as faithfully as his ancestors have done."

The only persons in the saloon, besides the royal family and the Russian princes and their suite,

were the high officers of the crown. The music was delightful. The Sieur Legros, from the Opera, and the celebrated Madame Mara, sung admirably. This Madame Mara, who is from Saxony, is a very beautiful woman, and sings with great feeling and energy. Sieur Legros gave this year, of which I now speak, several charming concerts in public, in which he was assisted by Sieur Laïs and Madame St. Hubertin and several other first-rate artistes. Their great attraction was a *stabat*, composed by several celebrated musicians, and performed by a concourse of talent in every department of the art. These concerts only took place on occasions of high ceremony, or on certain days in Lent, when the other theatres were closed.

I returned to Madame de Mackan's apartment to sup, and it was three in the morning when we left Versailles. We were all so fatigued that we fell asleep in the carriages. The grand-duchess had a violent headache from the excessive light and noise. However, their imperial highnesses were very well pleased with their reception at Versailles, of which they wrote a long account next day to the czarina.

It was very late next morning when we rose; when I came down stairs I found before me a beautiful present from the count du Nord, a basket of delicious fruits and flowers. He had

heard me say the evening before that I was very fond of them. I dined the same day with the princes, and thanked the grand-duke several times for his agreeable present. The grand-duchess was greatly amused by my excessive gratitude, which, she said, must be the effect of indigestion; a calamity which would most certainly have befallen me if I had eaten all the strawberries and cherries that had been sent me.

In the evening I went to the opera with M. and Madame Beckendorf. I am very fond of theatrical representations, and never lose an opportunity of gratifying this inclination. The piece was 'The Persecuted Stranger,' a comic opera, which had been performed for the first time six months before in the Theatre du Menus. It had since, as I am told, received many additions and alterations, by which it has been very much improved. The words were by M. de Rozay, and the music by M. Anfossi, a celebrated Italian composer. The theatre was crowded, which, with the continued applauses of the audience, produced a very fine effect. I never saw a more brilliant performance. The theatre (which Madame Beckendorf remarked to me was much handsomer than that at St. Petersburg) was the new one at the Porte St. Martin), which had been erected in place of that burnt on the 8th of the preceding June. The ancient building was situated

near the Palais-Royal, and on the evening of its destruction had been crowded to excess; but, fortunately, audience, actors, all escaped, with the exception of one or two of the humbler assistants of the stage. It was one of the centre-scenes that had first taken fire, and before the ropes could be cut by which it was suspended, the whole edifice was in flames, and the Palais-Royal and several other buildings were in the greatest danger of being consumed. Blazing splinters were flying in every direction, but were fortunately prevented by the rain, which fell in torrents, from doing any mischief. In about an hour from the commencement of the conflagration, the whole building fell in with a terrible crash.

The provisional theatre was erected near the Porte St. Martin, on the site of the old city magazine, from a plan designed by M. Lenoir, an architect. It was commenced in July, and finished in October. It was guaranteed to stand for six years.* It was opened with the representation of 'Adèle del Ponthieu' (by Piccini), to which the public were admitted free in honour of the birth of the dauphin. There are four operas during the week, on Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. The opera balls commence at midnight and close at seven in the morning.

* It is standing still.

Whilst we were at dinner the following verses were presented to the count du Nord :—

'From the deep heart of France the strain has gone forth,
Hail, honour, all hail to the star of the North !
Which smiles in this month over our happy land,
And beaming thus softly and brightly it yields
A power that we feel fertilizes our fields :
And the flowers of our valleys in beauty expand,
And each blossom that opens from harm it shields.
And late, as through evening's soft shadows I strayed,
I heard whilst the light through the foliage played,
'Twas the voice of the people, soft pouring forth,
Hail, honour, all hail to the star of the North !
Which smiles in this month over our happy land.
And thus from the Court to the brink of our strand,
The poor and the great the same strain shall pour forth,
Hail, honour, all hail to the star of the North !
Which smiles in this month over our happy land.

Will my readers think me fastidious when I say that I do not think these verses a whit better than those I have transcribed before ? I would not have copied these rhapsodies at all, but that they are in general circulation, and may serve as a specimen of the present style of poetry. Great poets rarely grace this terrestrial scene.

20th May.—I dined at home this day, although the grand-duchess had done me the honour of saying that covers were laid every-day on her table for M. d'Oberkirch and me. I had gone to her hôtel in the morning to pay my respects, and as we were sitting near a window we suddenly heard

loud shrieks in the street. I went towards the balcony, and could only see a great crowd collected without being able to discern the cause. One of the servants was sent to inquire what was the matter; and came back saying, that it was a poor woman who had been run over by a cabriolet.

"Ah!" cried the grand-duchess, "perhaps this poor woman has a husband and children!"

Her eyes filled with tears as she thought of her own children, so far away; and of what her sufferings would be if she were separated from them for ever.

"Take this," said she, presenting her purse to the servant, which contained about twenty-five louis, "carry it to the poor woman, and tell her that I will send her more to-morrow."

My dear princess's heart was still the same. The next day she sent more money, as she had promised, and desired the messenger to make particular inquiries about the state of the invalid. It was a great pleasure to the count du Nord to encourage this benevolent disposition in his wife.

This night I slept at Versailles, in the ambassador's hôtel. There were to be theatricals next day in the theatre of the palace, to which the queen was good enough to invite me. The grand-duchess was deeply touched by so thoughtful and delicate a manner of complimenting her. The

theatre of the palace is magnificent, both from its size and the splendour of its decorations, This court life was very wearisome to me; it was so fatiguing; so painful to be so far from home, from my father and daughter, and my usual mode of life interrupted. I often suffered a great deal without a murmur; for no person would pity me, everybody envying my position. It was very late when I went to sleep; first, I was kept awake by the noises in the hôtel; and then I began to fancy that Mary was ill, and that it was concealed from me: M. d'Oberkirch had to make a thousand protestations, before I was satisfied that this was not the case, so easily is a mother's heart disturbed: but it is a fact that Mary was sick this very night, and even at the very hour that I was so unhappy about her; I acknowledge that I believe in presentiments.

23*rd May.*—This morning I set out early to visit *Le Petit Trianon.* What a delicious walk, through groves perfumed with lilac, and filled with the charming songs of a thousand nightingales! The weather was magnificent, the air loaded with the balmy odours of spring flowers; whilst myriads of butterflies disported their gaudy wings, gilded by the rays of the sun. I could easily understand how delightful this charming retreat must be to the queen, who spends the greater part of every summer there.

The *Petit* is exactly opposite to the *Great Trianon.* It formerly belonged to Madame Dubarry, and was built and furnished by the orders of Louis XV. with the greatest taste and magnificence. Although the château is not large, it is very well arranged, and can accommodate a great number of persons. The grounds possess every imaginable decoration—ruins, winding paths, grottoes, sheets of water, cascades, mountains, temples, statues; in short everything that could diversify or beautify the prospect. One part of the gardens is laid out (according to the queen's wish) *à l'Anglaise,* and is very much admired. The French part is in the same style as Le Nôtre and the *quincunx* at Versailles. There is also a small theatre, where the queen is very fond of taking part in a comedy with the count of Artois and some intimate friends.

At our return from Trianon, we dined at our hotel with Madame Bombelles, and then dressed for the play. The queen had the extreme politeness to place at my disposal the small grated box belonging to the king, and which was immediately behind her own. She did me the honour of addressing me several times, and always, with the most flattering amiability.

The opera was 'Aline, or the Queen of Golconda,' the plot taken from a novel by the chevalier Bonfleur, who, it is said, had some such

adventures himself. The words are by Sieur Sedani, the music by M. de Monsigny; and it was arranged by M. de Laval, ballet-master to the king. The music was excellent, and very well performed; but I was particularly delighted with the dancers. To what a degree of perfection this voluptuous art has been carried! M. Gardel, *aîné*, danced in the first act, M. Vestris in the second, and M. Nourri in the third. The scenery was enchanting, and so skilfully arranged that nature herself could not appear fresher or more lovely. Who would not be Aline, and reign over this delicious country!

M. de Monsigny is *maître-d'hôtel* in ordinary to the duke of Orleans; he is highly esteemed, and everybody speaks of him in the highest terms.

I was invited to sup after the opera with the Princess de Chinay, lady of honour to the queen. This lady had a pet monkey, the smallest I think that I have ever seen, who, whilst his mistress was at the theatre, contrived to break his chain, and escape unperceived into a cabinet near the dressing-room of the princess. Here he found a little dog, not larger than himself, with whom he established a very amicable acquaintance. He behaved very discreetly for some time, committing no greater depredations than pouring water into his com-

panion's porringer and on the carpet. Perhaps the sense of freedom was in itself sufficient amusement for some time. After a little while he became more courageous, and ventured into the next room, and thence into the dressing-room, with which he was very well acquainted, being brought there every day. The crimson toilet-table had long been the object of his ambition, and you may suppose that he profited by the opportunity of making a nearer acquaintance with it. He overturned boxes, powder-puffs, hair-pins, combs and brushes; he spilled all the perfumes, taking care, however, to sprinkle himself well with them; he then rolled himself in the powder, and to complete his toilet he put on rouge and patches, as he had often seen his mistress do, with this difference that he put the rouge on his nose, and the patches on his forehead. That was not all; he made a head-dress of a ruffle, and thus, completely dressed, walked into the room where we were all quietly at supper, little expecting such a visitor. He jumped on the table, and ran towards the princess; the ladies all fled shrieking, thinking it was the devil in person; and it was with difficulty that his mistress herself recognised him. She soon discovered that it was indeed her dear Almanzor, and reassured her company as she pointed him out sitting beside her, apparently enchanted with him-

self. The terror of the ladies was changed into laughter; and they all began petting him, and giving him gingerbread and filberts. I could not share in the general amusement. I think monkeys very amusing at a distance, but not in a drawing-room, where they make so much mischief. However, I thought the little monkey of the princess very comic in his fantastic toilet.

Whilst I was at Versailles, the countess du Nord was waited on by the flower-girls of the Pont-Neuf, who presented her with a basket of the most beautiful flowers in the world. The princess showed her gratitude with truly *imperial* generosity. She was passionately fond of flowers, and would, I am certain, if she could, have kept this basket all night in her room. She sent some of the most beautiful to my house, with directions that they should be preserved until my return.

The countess du Nord visited some time after the new prison in the Rue des Ballots, at the old Hôtel de la Force. She felt great pity for the poor prisoners, and she, together with her husband, shared amongst the prisoners for debt ten thousand livres. God, the sick, and the unfortunate were her first care. Her first visit every day was to Nôtre Dame, then to the Hôtel Dieu, where she distributed money in abundance. Immense sums were spent during this journey, but the

greater part in acts of charity, or incitements to industry. The princess lavished little money except upon the poor.

24*th May.*—I was still at Versailles. I dined with Madame Mackan, who was always so amiable. We talked a long time together, and then M. Mackan conducted M. d'Oberkirch and me to see the royal menagerie. I remarked to him that there were few strange animals, to which he replied—

"Have we not plenty of courtiers, and what more would you want?"

The Chevalier St. Louis, governor of the menagerie at Versailles, a man of very singular tastes, bought a great number of turkeys as an addition to his collection of curious animals. The king passing one day, accompanied, as was usual, by twelve *cent Suisse* (twelve soldiers of his body guard) and their captain, saw these birds, and said to the governor that he thought them very disagreeable. The governor took no notice. When next the king passed he was displeased to find the turkeys there still, and said to the chevalier, "Monsieur, if you do not dismiss this troop from your *regiment*, I pledge my royal word that I will deprive you of your *commission*."

Madame Mackan had the goodness to take me to the apartments of the royal children. The prin-

cess royal is a miracle of beauty, intelligence, and precocious dignity, and very like her august mother. She looked at me very attentively, and asked my name; when she was told, she said—

"You are German, madame?"

"No, madame, I am French, and Alsatian."

"I am glad of that, for I could not love foreigners."

How charming this was in so young a child! The dauphin was a beautiful infant. What a pity that so lovely a bud should fall from the royal stem. After leaving the royal apartments, I went with Madame de Bombelles to visit the wives of the different ministers of the crown. These were—

The count of Vergennes, minister of foreign affairs.
The marquis of Ségur, minister of war.
M. d'Amelot, minister of the king's household.
The marquis of Castries, naval minister.
Toly de Fleury, minister of finances.
M. de Maupéon, chancellor.
M. de Miromesnil, keeper of the seals.
The count of Breteuil, minister of Paris.

The marquis of Ségur, who was then lieutenant-general, and afterwards marshal of France, had both his arms shot off at the battle of Minden.

It was that thoughtless minister, M. de Maurepas, who, from friendship for the elder M. Amelot, appointed the younger minister of the royal house-

hold. "No person," said he, "can accuse me of having chosen this man on account of his talent."

The daughter of M. Amelot, secretary of state, was married to the count of Ferté Seneterre.

These visits were not very amusing; court ceremonies have always been disagreeable to me, but it was necessary that I should accustom myself to them. As a recreation, Madame Bombelles took me to visit the apartments and cabinets of the king, which I had not yet seen. They were not so handsome or as much ornamented as those of the queen. The simplicity of Louis XVI.'s taste is seen in everything about him. We ascended by a private staircase to a small room at the very top of the palace, where the king works as a locksmith, an occupation in which he takes great pleasure. As I entered this apartment, filled with tools, I was greatly impressed by these evidences of the simple tastes of so great a monarch.

We returned to sup with the duchess of Villequier. The duke of Villequier (formerly marquis) is second son of the duke d'Aumont. His elder brother, married to Mademoiselle Dufort-Duras, bore the title of duke of Mazarin until the death of his father, when he inherited that of Aumont. I have before related how their daughter was married to the prince of Monaco, by which union were united the possessions of Mazarin and Valentinois.

The sister of the dukes of Aumont and Villequier was married to the duke of Villeroi, her cousin-german, and is certainly one of the most remarkable ladies at court. She is a woman of superior intellect, and of unerring judgment both in men and things. Her imagination is brilliant, and her memory prodigious. She possesses great talent for discussion, for which her powers of observation furnish her with many piquant facts. She is rather vindictive, and her conversation at times extremely sarcastic. She has, however, a very good disposition, and is sensitive even to susceptibility. She well deserved the sobriquet of *bonne méchante*, which was given to her at court. She loves or hates with great ardour.

In her youth she was passionately fond of music, literature, and the fine arts, but afterwards turned her attention entirely to politics, on which she will argue with gentlemen with most surprising clearness and judgment. She is strongly opposed to the present democratic tendency of public opinion.

On the evening of which I write she supped with us at her sister-in-law's, and expressed great pity for us because of our playing the game of loto-dauphin. She made many very amusing remarks upon this game (which was very fashionable, but certainly did not require much exertion of the

mind), whilst she conversed in a corner with a gentleman, a kind of *savant*, whose name I cannot at this moment remember. This gentleman had apartments in the hôtel d'Aumont at Paris, which was a great advantage for him in his studies. He was poor and timid, and the duchess would not allow any person to treat him unkindly. How often was her heart planning projects of benevolence at the very moment that her sarcastic conversation was inflicting deep wounds around her! Unfortunately, one word may do more harm than could be compensated by a thousand acts of goodness.

25th May.—I returned from Versailles to Paris, and immediately after my arrival hastened to visit the countess du Nord. She made me stay to dinner, and we related to each other all that we had seen or heard during our separation. She travelled with great profit, making notes of every interesting or remarkable event, and seeking every opportunity of obtaining information. It was she who first suggested to me the idea of this journal, and consequently of these memoirs.

"How delightful," said she, "it will be, as we grow old, to review the scenes and feelings of our youth; and, besides, would you not wish to leave some trace of your existence after you had crossed the stormy sea of life? Our children will read

the pages on which we inscribe our sentiments and our ideas; they will learn from them how warmly we loved them, and cherish our memories with deeper and more lasting affection."

M. de la Harpe dined with us, and after dinner he read to us his translation of Lucian, which is deservedly very much admired. I did not like him much; I thought him stiff, pedantic, and self-satisfied. He poured forth streams of bile, in speaking of his brother authors, not one of whom he would allow to possess the least genius. The grand-duchess was entirely of my opinion.

When Lucian was finished, I went to visit the princess de Bouillon. Her husband is colonel of the regiment which my father, uncle, and M. de Wimpffen have successively commanded; he has the greatest friendship for my father. The princess, who is daughter of Constantine landgrave of Hesse-Rheinfelt-Rothembourg, and of the Countess Mary of Staremberg, received me with the greatest kindness. The duke of Bouillon, father to the prince, is still alive, and a widower, having lost his wife, who was a princess of Lorraine-Massan. The ancient dukes of Bouillon were of the house of Lamarck, which failing in the male line, the title was perpetuated in the family of Latour of Auvergne, by the marriage of the heiress, Charlotte de Lamarck, with the Marshal Turenne, in 1591. The princess of

Bouillon asked me to remain to supper, but having promised the grand-duchess to sup with her, I was obliged to refuse, though very anxious to see her father and mother-in-law. They were both remarkable persons, one being grandson of the great Sobieski, and brother of the princess of Rohan-Montbazon, and the other celebrated by her own adventures. She had been in love with Marshal Saxe, and public report accused her of having poisoned Mdlle. Lecouvreur, whom she suspected of supplanting her in his affections. To what a degree must she not have forgotten herself, before anybody would have taken the liberty of accusing a woman of her rank of so base a crime! What a lesson it ought to be for others!

Before my return to the grand-duchess, I paid several visits, one to the countess of Halwill. The count of Halwill was marshal-de-camp, and had been for a long time colonel of the regiment of Halwill-Suisse, which was disbanded. The Halwills are a very ancient family. The name of Halwill is mentioned in the record of a carousal at Augsburg in 1080, and a Philip Halwill appeared in a tournament at Zurich in 1165.

My next visit was to the viscountess of Equevilly, *née* Dieck, a very young and very agreeable woman, who was only a short time married, and had been presented about a week before. The viscount of

Equevilly is second colonel of the dragoon regiment of Deux-Ponts. His father the marquis of Equevilly was lieutenant-general and captain of the *Vautrait*, as the office of captain in charge of the tents and royal pavilion at the boar-hunt was vulgarly called.

I paid many other visits, several of which were *en blanc*, that is to say, that I left my card. The customs in this country have been always extremely fantastic, but we must go with the stream, or be called *ignorant country ladies*, as Madame de Villeroi angrily called the provincial ladies who visited her at her château. The countess du Nord, whose judgment was very correct, often laughed with me at these *little great things*, but, however, had the good sense to conform to them. Monarchs themselves must yield to fashion.

CHAPTER XI.

The countess du Nord at Nôtre-Dame—St. Peter's and Nôtre-Dame—Gift from the queen—Iphigénie en Tauride —Mdlle. Laguerre intoxicated—The duke of Bouillon, her lover — Couplets — Order of Félicité — Origin of Gluckists and Piccinists—Dancing—M. de Beaumarchais at the countess du Nord's—Jealousy of La Harpe—Reading of the 'Marriage of Figaro'—Séance at the Academy—M. d'Arnoud—Canes à la Barmécide—The countess du Nord at the Théâtre Français—Verses—The new theatre—The actors—The pretended decay of art—Le Petit Dunquerque—Variétés amusantes.

1782. 26*th May.*—MADAME BECKENDORF took me to visit the *dome of the Invalides*, which interested me very much. She was *enceinte* and very delicate, which, however, did not prevent her from going everywhere, and keeping herself in a perpetual state of motion. We returned together to dine with the countess du Nord. We were very gay during dinner, and talked a great deal; the princess entertained us with an account of the visit she made to Nôtre-Dame during my residence at Versailles. She particularly admired the pictures with which the church is ornamented, of which she

spoke with great judgment and taste, for she is herself very well versed in the art, and draws perfectly well. Their imperial highnesses had expected to make their visit to this edifice quite incognito; but, spite of their precautions, their intention was discovered, and they were received by the canons with due honour. The princess conversed there for some time with the Abbé de Lafaye, who has many relations in Alsace. As we were on the subject of churches, the grand-duchess gave us a detailed description of St. Peter's and of Rome, the capital of the Catholic world. I was very much struck by the parallel she drew between St. Peter's and Nôtre-Dame; two buildings which cannot bear a comparison, except in the point of view in which she considered them.

"At St. Peter's," said she, "one feels overpowered by the beauty, extent, and majesty of the edifice, and hardly dares to address the Supreme Being, in whose honour this gorgeous temple has been raised, so deep is the impression of one's own insignificance, and of the immense distance between the creature and the Creator; but at Nôtre-Dame, built when religion had so much influence over the minds of men, there is a mysterious something which leads the soul to confidence and prayer. One feels a certainty of being heard and pitied, one yields unhesitatingly to the divine influence of love and hope.

These, at least," continued the princess, "were my sensations in the two churches; but, perhaps, you will be surprised when I say that I prefer our Greek churches to either."

Happily for the grand-duchess, she had entirely conquered her regret for the worship of her childhood.

After dinner she showed us a magnificent fan, ornamented with diamonds, which the queen had presented her the day of the dramatic representation at Versailles. There was an eye-glass in the handle, which served her majesty with an excuse for presenting it, which she did with that grace and tact peculiar to herself.

"I know," said she, "that, like me, you are a little shortsighted, an inconvenience which I beg you will allow me to remedy; and may I hope that you will keep this simple ornament in remembrance of me?"

"I will keep it whilst I live," replied the princess; "and never will I forget that to it I owe the happiness of being better able to see your majesty."

After dinner I went with General Wurmser to hear Piccini's opera of 'Iphigénie en Tauride,' and 'Le Devin du Village,' of which both the words and music are by the celebrated Jean Jacques Rousseau. This 'Iphigenia' of Piccini's is the

same subject, and almost the very same words as that of 'Guimand de la Touche,' set to music by M. Gluck in 1779, and of which the success was immense, the interest of the piece being very well sustained throughout, and the music in the most perfect harmony with the subject. Mdlle. Levasseur played Iphigenia; Larrivée, Orestes; Legros, Pylades; and Moreau, Thoas. It was two years after that Piccini produced his opera on the same theme, to the great indignation of the *Gluckists*.

At the second representation of Piccini's opera, Mdlle. Laguerre appeared on the stage quite intoxicated; the audience were indignant, they hissed, stamped, hooted, and loudly demanded that she should be sent to Fort l'Evesque, which was done at last, to the great annoyance of her lover, the duke of Bouillon, who has ruined himself for her. He carried his passion for her to the most ridiculous excess, and it was (as everything is in France), made the subject of a popular song. I will transcribe these verses, which are the best I have yet presented to my readers:—

Bouillon est preux et vaillant,
  Il aime *la guerre*;
A tout autre amusement
  Son cœur la préfère;
Ma foi, vive un chambellan
Qui toujours s'en va disant:
Moi j'aime *la guerre*, ô gué!
Moi j'aime *la guerre*.

Au sortir de l'opéra
  Voler à *la guerre*,
De Bouillon qui le croira
  C'est le caractère ;
Elle a pour lui des appas
Que pour d'autres elle n'a pas,
Enfin c'est *la guerre*, ô gué !
Enfin c'est *la guerre*.

A Durfort il faut *du Thé*
  C'est sa fantaisie,
Soubise moins dégouté
  Aime la *Prairie*.
Mais Bouillon, qui pour son roi,
Mettrait tout en désarroi,
Aime mieux *la guerre*, ô gué !
Aime mieux *la guerre*.*

This poor duke de Bouillon was a most singular man, and used to do the most extraordinary things : he instituted an order for the younger ladies of the court, which he called the order *De la félicité*, and for which he had numerous aspirants. His friend the marquis of Chambonas, so celebrated for his wit and prodigality, was *lieutenant maître* of the order, and its statutes were composed of maxims of gallantry to which all were obliged to conform. Its members wore on the left side a small cross suspended from a green ribbon. Green being the emblem of hope. The duke asked me to become a member, but I refused ; I could not admire all

* These verses being entirely a play upon words, it would be impossible to retain their double signification in a translation.—*Note by the Editor.*

this chivalry, nor did I need the order of *Félicité* to insure my happiness.

But it is time that we should return to the opera of Iphigenia (I am speaking now of Piccini's), and although a Gluckist, I must acknowledge that it possesses a great deal of merit. Why compare two men so absolutely different? And why elevate one at the expense of the other? This war originated in 1778, from an expression of the Abbé Arnaud, who said that Gluck had composed an Orlando, and Piccini an Orlandino. Marmontel, who had written the words of Piccini's opera, was absolutely furious; he stormed, he raved, and sounded the trumpet of war in every direction. All flew to arms, ladies as well as gentlemen; the whole order of things was disturbed, lovers quarrelled, friends fell out, husbands and wives were disunited, because, forsooth, their musical tastes could not agree. I myself knew a very pretty woman, (whose name I will not mention,) who considered she gave sufficient excuse for her want of affection for her husband when she said,—

"How could any one be faithful to such a man? He is a Picciniste, and stuns my ears from morning until night."

"And you repay him from night until morning," replied some person.

After 'Iphigenia' we had the 'Devin du Village,'

a very pretty pastoral. The part of Collette was performed by a débutante, Mdlle. Maillot, who was very well received; she sang better than her predecessor, Mdlle. Audinot, but her acting was not good. The Sieur Duquesney was very good in the character of Colin.

The principal dancers were Mdlle. Guimard—a very handsome and graceful person, and who has been very much admired—and Vestris's son and nephew. The son is called Vestris Allard, being the combined names of his father and mother; and though he has had great success, it is said that he will never equal the *dieu de la danse*.

At our return from the opera, a great pleasure awaited us at the palace of the countess du Nord, and which we enjoyed in defiance of M. de la Harpe, whom it gave me great pleasure to see annoyed. M. de Beaumarchais was to read to their imperial highnesses his 'Marriage of Figaro,' which had not yet appeared on the stage, as he had been refused permission to have it performed. M. de la Harpe came every day to the count du Nord's, under pretext of being his correspondent, and the prince (as well as we) was become thoroughly weary of him. His excessive and ridiculous self-love was unbearable: no amount of compliments could satisfy him; he was become a burden to us all. The count du Nord hesitated as to whether he

should allow the reading of M. de Beaumarchais' performance, fearing that it would excite the jealousy of M. de la Harpe, and said, laughing,—

"I would not wish to fall out with the higher powers."

But the countess du Nord insisted, and he was obliged to consent.

How great a difference there was between M. de Beaumarchais and M. de la Harpe! I admired the former very much; he had a handsome, open, intellectual countenance, with perhaps an expression a little too bold. I was told that he by no means deserved my good opinion—that he was a most worthless man; which certainly may have been the case, but most undoubtedly he had a very extensive mind, a most daring courage, and a strength of purpose that no obstacle could overcome: it will be admitted that these were great qualities. Son of a clockmaker, his merit raised him to rank with princes; he triumphed over the envy or ill-will of all his competitors, and by his talent has amassed an immense fortune. He was in every way a remarkable man. It is said that he loved his daughter with the greatest affection; and I do not believe it possible that a good father could be a bad man.

However that may be, we were very much pleased with his 'Marriage of Figaro.' It was

not so much admired as the 'Barber of Seville,' why I do not know; perhaps that it outraged some dramatic law; but I would most decidedly prefer it. I thought it more amusing, the dialogue more lively, and the style altogether more brilliant. His enemies asserted that he described himself in the character of Figaro; which may be, but there are many other things to be admired in it. I will give the fruit of my reflections on this piece when I come to speak of its representation, at which I was afterwards present.

May 27.—The countess du Nord was good enough to ask me to spend the morning with her in examining the merchandizes of different shopkeepers, who were to bring their greatest rarities for her inspection. She bought some superb ornaments of enamel set in marcasites, which were a real curiosity, and cost as much as if they were of precious stones. Afterwards I had the honour of accompanying their imperial highnesses to the Academy, where a special meeting was held in their honour. This assembly had a very imposing air. M. de la Harpe read some verses in praise of the count du Nord, which I thought deficient both in taste and tact. In the first place, his poem was too long, and in the next place it contained a lengthened criticism on the German poets, which certainly was not the most agreeable subject to have read before

the grand-duchess, a German princess. She remarked this to me herself. The countess du Nord is very well acquainted with the poetry of her country; and it is very possible that M. de la Harpe had never read one German poet in the original, without which it would be impossible to judge impartially. Further on in his composition he compares the grand duke to Peter the Great; but the prince, whose judgment is very correct, rejected the ill-judged flattery, saying,—

"It is my greatest ambition to resemble him one day, and to continue the great work that he has commenced; but at present I do not deserve to have my inglorious name inscribed beside his."

One thing that M. de la Harpe said in praise of the prince was indeed true; it was, that "To envious courtiers he would be an excellent master in the art of pleasing."

An address was then read by Count Schouwalow, which wearied everybody. M. Darmond spoke very long and very well on 'Julius Cæsar:' this is the opinion that I heard, for I do not consider myself competent to form a judgment on such a composition. At the conclusion of the meeting, M. Dalembert distributed medals amongst the persons composing the suite of their imperial highnesses. Never did I see a more ignoble-looking philosopher; and he paid us compliments in a tone that would have

better suited an insult. At first I did not know in what sense I was to understand what he said.

The countess du Nord astonished the academicians by her extensive information, and flattered them not a little by quoting passages from some of their most celebrated works. The illustrious travellers promised their portraits to these gentlemen, and they are to be placed beside that of the celebrated Christina, queen of Sweden.

We returned to dinner, and our conversation was entirely of the *immortal* members of the Academy, and especially of M. de la Harpe. Poor M. de la Harpe!—epigrams showered on him like hail from all parts of Paris. I remember a very amusing anecdote that I heard of him: he was one day driving in the Bois de Boulogne, in a carriage with two ladies, one of whom, as well as I remember, was the duchess de Grammont. They were overwhelming him with the adulation and compliments which his self-love required from everybody, but which, to do him justice, he always returned with interest, naturally supposing that what was so agreeable to him must needs be so to all the world, when a man passed near the carriage, crying, "Who will buy my walking-sticks à la Barmécide?" "Walking-sticks à la Barmécide," said one of the ladies; "that ought to interest you, M. de la Harpe;

allow me to present you with one of these canes in remembrance of your great success."

M. de la Harpe considered that the representation of his tragedy of the 'Barmécide' had been very successful. The man was called, and he approached the carriage, presenting three or four sticks, with very ugly ivory balls on the tops.

"Why do you call them à la Barmécide?" said the lady.

"You shall see, madame," said the man, with a very knowing air.

He took off the ivory ball and showed to the lady a large cat-call, hidden under it. The two ladies had the cruelty to burst into laughter, and poor LaHarpe was overcome by shame and wounded self-love; "he could," said M. de Beaumarchais, "have shed tears of bile."

After dinner their imperial highnesses went to the Théâtre Français, where they had hired a box for the time they were to remain in Paris. This was their third visit; they preferred it to every other public amusement, which undoubtedly is a proof of an enlightened taste. The performance was 'Mercure Galant,' and the 'Chasse de Henri Quatre.' The count du Nord was so pleased with the latter piece, that he wished to have it repeated, which gave occasion to the following verses:

When the proud hearts of Frenchmen their Henry recall,
They some trace of his glory would bring back for thee ;
And, art rising triumphant, his virtues, and all
That he once was in life, thou here pictured mayst see.
And the virtues here recorded
In thy breast a mirror find.
Prince, thou weepest ; and applauded
Is each tear by souls refined.
And as he to his people a father hast been,
So shalt thou unto thine when the sceptre thou'lt own ;
But more perfect the likeness between you is seen,
When we gaze on the bride thou wilt place on the throne.
In her deep and tender feeling
Thou love's balmy power shalt know ;
And thy mighty mother's teaching
To reign and conquer well can show.
As thy tears for our Henry fast flowing we see,
It proclaims that his equal one day thou shalt be.

Their imperial highnesses were loudly cheered during the evening, to which testimony of public admiration they replied by the most gracious salutations.

The theatre was quite new, and built near the Luxembourg, on the site of the old Hôtel de Condé, which had been purchased from the civic authorities by the king, and given by him to his brother on condition that he should build a theatre there. Although the erection cost two millions, the public were very much dissatisfied with the accommodation : the boxes were small, and there were many parts of the building from which the stage could not be seen at all. Another objection was the dazzling

whiteness of the painting, which the ladies declared quite eclipsed the most distinguished toilette. The architecture was very heavy ; but here for the first time we saw the audience in the pit seated.

Whatever may be said to the theatre, the actors were unexceptionable. What an assemblage of talent ! There were Messieurs Preville, Brigard, Molé, Dugazon, Desessart, Larive, Pazincourt, Henry ; Mademoiselles Belcours, Vestris, Preville, Molé, Poligny, La Chassargue, Raucourt, Suin, Sainval, Contates, &c. To praise these would be, indeed, superfluous.

Still we hear that the drama is declining. In my opinion people do not sufficiently consider all the study that it requires to make a good actor, and the long practice he must have before he will be quite *au fait* at the simulation of the thousand characters that he must represent. The greatest genius does not appear in noon-day splendour in the morning of its career. It is not just to judge the débutant by the standard of the perfect artist, who is perhaps not more superior to the new actor than he is to what he was himself when first he sought the public favour.

Mdlle. Bancourt, who has cast Mdlles. Clairon and Duménil quite into the shade, was considered at her début much inferior to them. Preville and Molé excel their predecessors, and certainly Pazin-

court; Fleury and Mdlle. Contates, who at the time of which I write gave only indications of ordinary talent, have since far surpassed their masters. From which we may safely infer that there is very little truth in the assertion that the histrionic art is on the decline; our stage is and will be, I am certain, for a long time an honour to our country.

1782.—The Théâtre Français suffered a great loss this year in the retiring of Mdlle. Susy, who was an excellent actress in her *genre* (*de soubrette*); she was very much regretted.

We returned to sup with the countess du Nord, who was delighted with the evening's entertainment.

"Ah," said she to the grand-duke, "if we could enjoy such a pleasure at St. Petersburg!"

"What is there to prevent it?" said he thoughtfully; "we must think about it."

28*th May*.—Madame Beckendorf came for me very early; we were to visit the milliners, goldsmiths, &c. Amongst others we visited the 'Petit Dunkerque' (the shop of a celebrated jeweller at the Pont Neuf), and remained there several hours. Nothing could exceed the beauty of this reservoir of jewellery; it was filled with trinkets of every kind, of which the original value was multiplied ten times by the beauty of the elaborate workmanship. The price of every article was marked; and

although the ornaments were most elegant and varied, and finished in the most exquisite manner, the jeweller had the reputation of selling at a very moderate profit. The number of purchasers was said to be sometimes so great, that they were often obliged to bring a guard.

We each bought a trinket that was then very fashionable; it was a kind of little mill that was worn fastened with the watch. The grand-duchess took several of them to Russia.

After dining with the Beckendorfs, I went with Madame Skawronski to the Variétés Amusantes, where we were very much amused by 'Jerome Pointu.' We afterwards visited the ware-rooms of the cabinet-makers, where we saw some of the most beautiful furniture in the world. It was nine o'clock when I got home.

CHAPTER XII.

Visit to the countess de Vergennes—Adventure of Mdlle. ***—Indiscreet remark of the countess de Polignac—Brevet de dame—Court theatricals—Mdlle. Heinel, an opera dancer, retires to a convent—Verses—The rhymers of France—The princess de Chinay—Countess de Hénin Lieland—The countess du Nord at Nôtre-Dame—Ordinance of the king concerning Protestant children—The countess de Bruce—Jealousy of Catherine II.—Disgrace—Les Invalides—M. Thelusson—The Palais Royal—The cat of the house—A small house—Wit of Mdlle. Dervieux—An anecdote—Supper at Madame de Thavanet's—Reply to the king by M. De G***—The count du Nord at Bagatelle—Verses—The duchess de Lauzun—Insolent admiration of the duke de Lauzun for the queen—The princess de Hénin and Mdlle. Arnould—Society of the princess de Bouillon—The globes of Father Coronelli—The grand-duke at the tomb of Richelieu—The opera of Theseus—The queen and the countess du Nord at the 'Bal d'opéra'—Adventure of the duke de Chartres at the ball—Reflections of the count du Nord.

29*th May.*—I WAS obliged to go alone to Versailles, very much against my inclination, as I left M. d'Oberkirch ill; but I could not stay away, as the queen had the goodness to invite me the day before, and the countess du Nord would be greatly disappointed by my absence. I dined with Madame de Mackan, who entertained a very large company

that day, and after dinner I paid several visits to various persons of the court. The first was to the countess of Vergennes, wife of the minister of foreign affairs. Her two brothers-in-law were, one a marquis and ambassador in Switzerland, the other a viscount, married to Mdlle. de Lentilhac, was lieutenant-colonel of the *Gardes de la Porte.* The conversation at Madame de Vergennes was entirely about an extraordinary adventure which had just happened, but was not publicly known. In relating this rather painful tale I will not mention names; but if these memoirs should fall into the hands of any person who knew the parties concerned they will only too easily recognize them.

A young lady of very high family was brought home from the convent where she had been educated, and told that her parents had arranged a marriage for her with a very distinguished person. To the great surprise of her friends the young lady not only refused to marry, but absolutely declined appearing in any company whatever, even to see Madame Elizabeth who had wished to receive her. Her family were greatly disturbed: they asked the nuns, and her most intimate friends amongst the boarders at the convent, if they knew anything that could be the cause of this extraordinary conduct, but in vain—the mystery was impenetrable. Her mother offered her everything that she could

possibly be supposed to wish for, if she would accompany her to a concert at the residence of the king's sisters. She refused: she was surrounded by spies; but nothing could be discovered that would explain her conduct: they began to fear that she was a victim to monomania. This continued for three months, when one day she most unexpectedly said, that if she would be permitted that she would on the following Sunday go to the mass *du roi*. Her family were delighted with even this concession; and milliners and dressmakers were immediately employed in preparing a suitable toilet. Her appearance at church made a great sensation; but she was quite self-possessed, and looked around as if seeking some person. When the congregation was leaving, she uttered an exclamation of surprise, and turning to her mother said,

"Madame, could you tell me who is that gentleman dressed in gray?"

"That is the marquis of * * *."

"And the lady who is with him; who is she?"

"That is his wife, Mdlle. de * * *, to whom he is married about a fortnight."

"Married!" cried the poor girl. "*He* is married!"

At this exclamation the persons near looked at her in amazement, but she took no notice of anybody, but rushed to the door, shrieking like a mad-

woman, as in fact she was. The anguish of the poor mother may be easily imagined. At their return home she questioned her, and at length discovered the entire truth. It appeared that the sister of this marquis *** was a fellow-pupil of the young lady's, and often carried her with her to the parlour when her brother came to visit. The gentleman was struck by the beauty of his sister's friend (whose family he knew to be very rich), and did not allow his admiration to remain a secret. His sister, of course, entered warmly into his interests; and the imaginations of these two innocent girls were excited by the romantic interest always attached to a secret love affair, and they had the ingenuity to contrive many secret meetings without the knowledge of their governesses. Where they met, how often, or to what extent the intimacy was carried, was never known. One thing, however, is certain, that another bride was offered to the marquis, who, besides a very large fortune, could bestow on him a very important office, her uncle being in high favour with the monarch. This was a temptation too great to be resisted, and the unworthy lover sacrificed his affection to ambition. Our heroine being about to leave the convent, it would be impossible to conceal his treachery once she appeared in society, where she would of course hear immediately of his intended marriage, and her family

being very powerful might easily overturn all his projects. This was a serious dilemma; but our gentleman got out of it in a manner worthy of himself. Calculating on the young lady's romantic disposition, and being certain of her affection, he fabricated a tale, which easily gained credence from her innocent and confiding mind. With a very mysterious air he told her that there was the greatest danger of their being separated for ever, but that it would be impossible for him to explain further at present; and that their only chance of escaping so cruel a fate was by her refusing to appear in society for some time. The affectionate girl unhesitatingly agreed to do anything that would avert their threatened separation. He made her swear on the gospels that she would not go out of her father's house, or receive any visits, for three months; but he told her that when that time would be expired, to go on Sunday to mass. Three months, he calculated, would give him sufficient time to conclude his marriage and receive his appointment.

His plan was quite successful, as we have seen. The anger of the young lady's parents was boundless; but what they could do to punish him would only injure their child, and they were therefore obliged to bear this grievous mortification in silence. Their daughter, of a gentle and yielding disposition, was shaken both in body and mind by the false-

hood of her lover. She was carried into Languedoc, where her father had a magnificent château ; where, some time after, she was married to a gentleman of the neighbourhood, of good birth but poor. Living far from court, he was ignorant of the circumstance I have just related, and considered the rich Mdlle. * * * a very good wife, notwithstanding the weakness of her intellect. Time has had a most beneficial effect on this poor creature ; her mind has recovered its tone, and she has become warmly attached to her husband, and quite forgotten her first sad love. I have often met her ; she is universally beloved, and is certainly one of the most estimable women of the court. The moral of my tale is this : that we ought never to despair, but trust in that Divine Providence who is ever ready to assist the weak.

After my visits I returned to the countess du Nord, whom I found quite annoyed by an observation of the Countess Diana de Polignac, lady of honour of Madame Elizabeth. The grand-duchess had that morning paid a visit to Madame Elizabeth, and when she withdrew, the Countess Diana conducted her through the apartments, a customary piece of court etiquette. The countess du Nord spoke with great admiration of the beauty and amiability of the princess. "Yes," said the Countess Diana, "she is handsome, but she is too fat."

There was very little tact in this reply, for if criticism could find anything to blame in the appearance of the grand-duchess it was an inclination to embonpoint. It may therefore be easily supposed that this remark was not very agreeable. She replied rather dryly, "I cannot see any fault in Madame Elizabeth's figure. I do not think that any person could look better."

This countess de Polignac was neither married nor a canoness, although she wore the cross of the chapter of Lorraine. She appeared at court in virtue of a 'Brevet de dame,' granted to her by the king. She was not handsome, or well made, and was rather negligent in her dress; but her wit and sensitive disposition made her a universal favourite. The least thing would disturb her, and make her blush like a girl just returned from school. She had, however, more strength of mind than was generally supposed, and loved and sustained her family with an energy beyond all praise. By her fascinating powers of conversation she gained many friends for the house of Polignac, whilst the fear of her piquant wit restrained many who would willingly have injured it.

When I left the grand-duchess, I went to the theatre of the court, to which the queen had the goodness to invite me, and also to reserve for me the same box as before, and which was immediately

behind that in which she herself sat with the countess du Nord. She addressed me several times, and in the most gracious and amiable manner invited me to sup with her on the following Thursday, when there was to be a great fête in honour of the grand-duchess in the gardens of Trianon.

The performance was 'Iphigénie en Aulide,' a tragic opera in three acts. The verses were written by M. du Bollet, and the music by the Chevalier Gluck. We had, after a ballet by Gardel, ballet-master to the king, the admirable pantomime of 'Ninette à la Cour,' in which Mdlle. Heinel appeared. She was a celebrated dancer, and it was said desperately in love with Vestris, who had retired from the stage about a year before. She had formerly belonged to the Stuttgard Company, and was considered to excel in the more dignified cast of character.

Que dans tout son éclat, Ninette a paru plaire
Qu'embelli par Vestris, ennobli par Heinel,
Le ballet a dû satisfaire.
Puisqu'il n'était déjà critique si sévère,
Qui ne dit ; quand on a Gardel
On ne peut regretter Noverre.

Noverre was at that time in London, where his ballets were very successful. One of them, entitled 'Adèle de Ponthieu,' he dedicated to the duchess of Devonshire.

The duchess du Nord was an object of universal admiration this evening; every eye was turned on her; she never looked so beautiful, and her dress was really magnificent. Some person, I forgot who, compared her to Minerva, with the attributes of the Graces.

Amongst the verses with which our illustrious travellers were overwhelmed, the following appear to me the best, if it were only for their truth. They were composed on this same day by a gentleman of the court:—

Loudly fame your name rehearses;
But lay a stock of patience by you
To read the rondoes, odes, and verses
With which the rhyming French will try you.

These verses were given to me after the opera, by the princess de Chinay, lady of honour to the queen, in a visit that I paid her before going to sup with Madame de Mackan. She is a very good and amiable woman, equally distinguished for her refinement and her virtues. Her sister-in-law, the dowager princess of Chinay, *née* Lepelletier de St. Fargeau, is lady of honour to Madame Victoria. Prince Chinay, father of Prince Hénin, was married to Mdlle. Fitz-James, daughter of the duke of Fitz-James, governor of Limousin. They are of the family of 'Hénin d'Alsace' or 'Hénin Lieland.' A daughter of Mdlle. d'Alsace was married to

Count Caraman (Riquet), a descendant of the engineer who constructed the canal of Languedoc. The mother of the princes of Chinay and Hénin was a Beauveau-Craon. The title of prince of Chinay formerly belonged to the princes of Ligne, and descended by marriage to the house of Hénin.

30*th*.—I rose very early, as I had promised the grand-duchess to accompany her to Nôtre-Dame. The ceremonies were magnificent. The archbishop, Monseigneur de Suigné, officiated. We were placed immediately next the choir. The music was delightful, and I felt deeply impressed by the imposing pomp of these catholic ceremonies. The countess du Nord gave a large sum to the poor and the 'Enfans Trouvés.' Her benevolence was inexhaustible; it would not be possible to tell how much she and her august husband distributed in charity during their residence in Paris. No person applied to them in vain; every day they left home with purses filled with gold, and returned without a louis. It was the wish of the empress; and her children, happy to obey her, did not spare the imperial treasury.

This day I heard a piece of news which gave me great pleasure; it was, that the king had registered in the Parliament an ordonnance, by which all curés were enjoined to record the declarations of all persons who presented their children, without question-

ing them in any way. This was to prevent certain curés from trying to cast a doubt on the legitimacy of Protestant children. It did not recognise the validity of Protestant marriages, but it gave us hope for a better future. The grand-duchess was as much pleased as I: in the bottom of her heart she still loved her ancient brethren.

After mass we dined with the countess du Nord, and went afterwards with Madame Beckendorf to visit the 'Gobelins.' This interesting manufacture is unique in Europe, and some persons assert that the beauty of the tints imparted to the wool is materially assisted by the waters of the little river that flows near. The king has presented several of these magnificent hangings to their imperial highnesses; they were shown to us, amongst others, and were of incomparable beauty. During this visit I was very much alarmed by Madame Beckendorf, who got ill three times. She over-fatigued herself, and notwithstanding the delicacy of her health, she would undertake anything or everything. We returned to sup with the countess Skawronski, who had invited us to meet a great number of Russians. My poor friend was so ill that she was obliged to go home, and I consoled myself with the countess de Bruce, a clever and beautiful woman, who had been a long time honoured by the friendship of the empress, but which she is said to have lost through

a jealous pique. They tell a rather strange story of this lady's powers of endurance. For an entire night she remained shut up in a press, where she ran the risk of being stifled, rather than appear before her irritated sovereign. When Catherine had retired, she was found almost expiring, but would never acknowledge the reason of her voluntary punishment. Her husband, governor of St. Petersburg, did not share in her disgrace. I conversed for a long time with this lady, whom I found very well informed, and without the slightest affectation. She laughed a great deal at one of her countrywomen, who was so tightly laced that she could scarcely breathe.

"It is so delightful to inhale the air," said she. Perhaps she was thinking of the press.

31*st May.*—I went with the countess du Nord to visit 'Les Invalides.' The grand-duke admired this institution very much: we went over every bit of it. The dome is magnificent. Here, as everywhere else, the grand-duchess was admired and wondered at for the extent of her information and the correctness of her taste. She criticised and praised the paintings of the chapels, and of the dome, like one who fully understood the subject on which she spoke. Every person was struck by the superiority of her mind and education. She spoke for a long time with the governor, M. d'Espagne.

The grand-duke inquired minutely into the state of these brave soldiers, who were better off then than when under the care of M. Leray de Chaumont, who was accused of amassing a fortune at the expense of their comfort. The luxury of his delicious dwelling at Auteuil is considered a sufficient proof of the justness of the charge.

This visit over, I called for the countess Skawronski, and we went together to visit the 'Maison Thelusson.' This building was a strange fantasy; it had already cost seven hundred thousand livres, and was still far from being finished. It was one of the greatest attractions of Paris, and it was necessary to procure tickets of admission. It appeared to me more bizarre than beautiful; the details were certainly most tasteful, and the staircase superb. The arcade which looked on the street spoiled the perspective, and was universally condemned. People asked how would Mr. Thelusson be able to support this establishment with the train of servants that it would require. He belongs to a very rich family of bankers.

After dinner I set out again, still accompanied by the countess. We went to the Palais Royal, where we saw the pictures of the duke of Chartres, and the gallery of the Encyclopædia. I was delighted with these pictures, amongst which were many chefs d'œuvres; but at the same time I do

not pretend to be very learned in the fine arts. We were very much amused by an old valet de chambre, who has charge of the invalids of the palace, without the walls of which he had not been for many years. He was born in the stables of the regent, to whom he was afterwards jockey. He had outlived many masters. He was very old, over eighty, but was still active, and related many a tale of past times. His greatest pleasure was to do the honours of the palace, of which he showed us every part, giving the history of every room and corridor. When we offered him a recompense for his trouble, he refused it proudly, saying,

"Monseigneur pays his people; and the old Laplace has eaten the bread of the house of Orleans since he was born."

After leaving the Palais Royal we went to see the small house and garden of Mdlle. Dervieux, a celebrated "fille de l'opéra." It was a gem. The furniture alone was worth the ransom of a king. Both court and city had contributed to its decoration. Although Mdlle. Dervieux was thirty, she had the reputation of being more beautiful than those even ten years younger. She made her début on the stage at fourteen, and was long the rival of Mdlle. Grumard. This house was in the Rue Chantereine. The garden, which was ornamented with a thousand curiosities, was laid out *à l'Anglaise*

If I were to describe all the beautiful things I saw there, I should never finish. This Mdlle. Dervieux was said to be very clever. Amongst the witty sayings recorded of her, I will relate one which was stolen by Mdlle. Sophia Arnould, and which it is only just to restore to the rightful owner.

"A young man from the provinces, of little note or fortune, fell desperately in love with this beautiful disciple of Terpsichore. He wrote, he prayed, but all in vain; she was deaf to his cries. At length one day he cast himself weeping at her feet, and implored her to grant him even a small portion of her love.

"'Will you not give it to me as an alms?' said he.

"'It is impossible, sir,' said she, 'I have too many poor already.'"

Here is the other:—The duchess of ***, a woman of very peevish temper, very wicked and very ugly, which latter quality she considered a serious misfortune, as she was a great coquet. (Am I not right in not telling her name?) This lady had a great desire to see this celebrated house of the actress, and went there one day, accompanied by one of her adorers, who had also the reputation of playing the same part towards Mdlle. Dervieux. The duchess, like me, found the house without an occupant, at least apparently so, and thinking

herself alone with her lover, gave free vent to the jealousy and the indignation with which all the luxury she saw inspired her. Of course the lady of the house was not spared. In entering the boudoir, the most delicious retreat in the world, she redoubled her exclamations. "Oh," said she, "this is too much, this exceeds all imagination; it could only be equalled in the 'Arabian Nights!'"

At the same moment, a small door, skilfully concealed, opened, and showed the saucy and laughing face of Mdlle. Dervieux, who had been a concealed and angry listener of all that had been said.

"Yes, madam," said she, "you are right, and I doubt much whether you could offer anything half so charming."

To what one exposes herself in entering into rivalry with these sort of persons! I cannot understand how any woman could degrade herself thus, nor do I think that anything could excuse such conduct.

I would not repeat these echoes of a dangerous and wicked world, but that I think it necessary to tell everything.

After this visit, a little indiscreet perhaps, although we did not see any person, we visited St. Roch, St. Sulpice, and the church Des Quatre Nations, where we were shown the mausoleum of Cardinal Mazarin. It is a very fine piece of sculp-

ture, but inferior to the tomb of Cardinal Richelieu, which we saw at Sorbonne. I will not describe either, as every person must either have seen or heard of them, and I would wish to avoid as much as possible, all unnecessary details.

We next bent our steps to the garden of the Tuileries. It was delightful to traverse its winding paths, and inhale the perfume of its million flowers. We did not leave this charming place until late, and I could scarcely have torn myself away then, if it were not that I had promised to sup with Madame Thavanet. At supper I met the Mackans, with whom I was becoming more intimate every day, and Mdlle. Zicart, a young lady who played very well on the harp. This instrument was just then coming very much into fashion, and many ladies looked on it only as an opportunity of displaying their lovely arms, and beautiful feet, besides that the attitude of the performer was very graceful. This, however, was not the case with Mdlle. Zicart, who was a very retiring person. I found much pleasure in her society, and took her and her mother home in my carriage.

1*st June.*—I dined with Madame Thavanet: M. d'Oberkirch could not come with me, as, to my great regret, he had been rather ill for some days. The dinner was very gay, I met there the countess of Clermont-Tonnerre, who had been married at

the commencement of that year. She had been canoness of Remiremont, and lady of honour to Madame Elizabeth. She was called Countess Delphine de Sorrans. She was lively, gay, and witty; I felt a great desire to become intimate with her, which I afterwards did, and I will often again have occasion to speak of her. She told us that the day that the countess du Nord had been present at the theatricals at Versailles, that the king remarked that of all gentlemen present the marquis of G*—— was the most elegantly and richly dressed, and complimented him upon it. This nobleman, who was very much in debt, replied to him with a serio-comic air,—"Sire, that is due." In the morning I had gone with the countess du Nord to see Bagatelle, a charming little residence in the Bois de Boulogne, belonging to the count of Artois, who did the honours with his usual grace. We were entertained with a concert, at which every musician in Paris assisted. The grand-duchess was delighted. The collation was worthy an epicure. The count of Artois is a most amiabe man, and very clever, not like his brother, the count of Provence, serious and grave, but possessing the true French genius for raillery and repartee. The grand-duchess admired him very much. As we were leaving, a gentleman of the court presented her the following impromptu, written in crayon :—

To all who around you admiringly throng,
Noble pair, is your lineage revealed;
Had you wished an incognito lasting and long,
'Tis your virtues you should have concealed.

After dinner M. d'Oberkirch having sent me word that he was better, I went to visit the princess de Bourbon, with whom I found the duchess de Lauzun, and the princess de Hénin, her two friends. Madame Lauzun, grand-daughter of the marshal de Luxembourg, was one of the most charming women in the world, well informed, witty, accomplished, and of a most amiable disposition. She was very much admired; but was generally sad on account of the conduct of her husband, who forsook her society often for that of unworthy rivals, and who of late had the audacity to proclaim that he was deeply enamoured of the queen. Her majesty could not endure him. An anecdote of this gentleman's folly was whispered in all the drawing-rooms of Paris,—I say whispered, because no person would tell it aloud, to spare the feelings of his amiable wife. It is said that he had the effrontery to assume the queen's livery, and follow her all day as a lackey, and even spent the night crouched at the door of her apartment. The queen did not even recognize him: he was in despair, when fortunately an opportunity offered of making himself more conspicuous. Her majesty was to

drive from Trianon, and at the moment she approached her carriage, he bent his knee to the ground, that she might tread upon it, instead of the usual step. Her majesty, surprised, looked at him now for the first time; but like a woman of tact and good sense as she was, she did not pretend to know who he was, and calling a page she said—

"I desire that that man should be dismissed; he is very awkward; he does not even know how to open a carriage door."

She passed on. M. de Lauzun was cut to the soul; but, profiting by the lesson he had received, he very seldom after appeared at court.

Madame de Lauzun does not complain, or even upbraid her husband, but she is generally silent and sad.

The princess de Hénin, who is equally neglected by her husband, takes it in better part, and declares herself very grateful to his mistress, the celebrated actress, Mdlle. Arnould. She loves her husband just enough to prevent her hating him, and says that she is very glad he has got something to occupy him.

"An idle man is so very wearisome," she adds.

"Has the prince de Hénin got something to do, then?" asked Mdlle. de Clermont, with malicious naïveté.

"Not from me, at least," replied the princess,

with the greatest coolness. The poor prince de Hénin was in fact one of the most tiresome men in the world. I forget who it was that called him the prince dwarf.

The princess de Bouillon received the best and most select society. On the evening of which I was speaking, I met at her house a doctor from Holland, who had only come the same year to Paris, and who professed a very singular doctrine, which he summed up in these words:—

"Friendship is a sentiment, which obliges one to receive everything from the person who is called a friend, but not to feel annoyed by the debt, as one should never feel embarrassed with a *friend.*"

At that time I was frightened and shocked by this doctrine; but, as I get older, I am obliged to admit that there is some truth in the maxim of the Dutch doctor.

2nd June.—I went very early to the countess du Nord, who had asked me to accompany her in her visit to the royal library. We went, and spent several hours in looking at the scientific treasures it contains. What books, manuscripts, medals, curiosities, &c. &c.! We examined particularly the two globes constructed by Father Coronelli, which were only just arrived. They have been since removed to Marly. They are the largest in

the known world. They are placed upon columns in the great hall, in the rez-de-chaussée; they are twelve feet in diameter, and M. count du Nord told me that the largest in St. Petersburg measured but eleven. The grand-duchess takes a great interest in everything relating to science and literature, and said that she would feel much more desire to possess the books she saw around, than all the gold of the world. She had been very strictly educated. The princess de Montbéliard had a great contempt for frivolity, and would not permit that her daughters should acquire any of our ridiculous French habits; in which I think she was perfectly right. From the library we returned to dinner; there were no strangers, and we conversed together for some time,—a pleasure which the grand-duke prefers to all other amusements, and in which he performs his part very well. He laughingly told us what had happened to him the evening before, at the Sorbonne. He had gone to see the tomb of Richelieu, and one of the learned residents of the establishment did the honours; and when they came to the tomb, said,—

"Your illustrious ancestor, Peter the Great, has knelt before this tomb, saying, 'Great man, if you still lived I would give you half my possessions to teach me how to govern the other half.'"

"If I were the cardinal, monsieur," replied the

grand-duke, "I would not expect to keep the gift long."

There was great shrewdness in this answer, especially when it was uttered by a son of Catherine II.

General Wurmser took me to hear the opera of 'Theseus,' of which the music was composed by Sieur Gosset. The ladies were magnificently dressed. The music was applauded in the warmest manner; it was very fine, particularly the chorus of demons. The acting was also very good. We had the Sieurs Legros and Larive, and Mdlle. Duplau.

The grand-duchess had made me promise to accompany her to the *bal de l'opéra*, very much against my will, for I feel very little pleasure in such amusements; but I would not wish to refuse her imperial highness. I supped with my dear princess, who was as joyous as a child, thinking of the pleasures of the ball.

"I am going to be myself again," said she, "until to-morrow."

"Do not be so certain, madame," said the grand-duke. "You will have no more freedom there than anywhere else; and, for my part, I will have several spies there to watch you, for I am answerable for you to the empress; and, besides, the lieutenant of police will have ten of his men there.

You will of course meet the queen, accompanied by the minister of the royal household, whose duty it is to be near her majesty on all such occasions. Do you think that enough ?"

"Ah! it is a great deal too much," said the princess laughing; "you have chased away all my gaiety—but I do not believe you."

The countess du Nord wore a superb domino *en chauve souris* (the latest fashion); it was left open in front to show her dress, which was magnificently embroidered with jet and spangles. She did not leave her husband's arm until she took that of M. d'Amelot, minister of the royal household, whose guardianship of the queen was undertaken by the count of Provence. The princesses went very little out of their box, and remained together all the evening. The queen never mixes in the crowd, without taking care that she may be known, although people accuse her of doing so. She goes once through the assembly. I heard of a very piquant remark addressed to the duke de Chartres by an unknown mask dressed as a tower; it appears that it occurred quite close to me without my knowing it. The prince was talking to a lady, when this mask approached and took part in the conversation, which was not at all agreeable to the duke, and he let the mask see that he was an intruder. The mask persevered, and the duke

enraged asked him if he did not know who he was. The conversation had taken a very cynical tone, which was habitual to the duke, and on which he prided himself a great deal, although it was a great injury to him both at court and in general society.

"I beg pardon, monseigneur," said the unknown, "I do know you, you have indeed unmasked yourself."

The duke was stunned by this daring answer, and when he recovered his presence of mind, he said to one of the gentlemen of his suite who stood near—

"Let that insolent man be arrested."

The tower was seized, but it was empty; its occupant had opened the door and disappeared amongst the crowd. The prince was outrageous, but there was no remedy. I remember the remark made by the count du Nord, with his usual penetration, when he was told of this adventure, and of some other things of this duke—

"The king of France is very patient. If my mother had such a cousin he would not remain long in Russia. The consequences of these rebellions in the royal family are of more importance than may at first appear."

I was very little amused by this ball. The atmosphere of such places breathes too much of

intrigue. I do not know how any virtuous woman can find pleasure there—one is obliged to hear so many expressions that must make one blush. The Parisian ladies think nothing of it; but we poor provincials, unaccustomed to such things, feel very much hurt, and for our particularity are only called prudes. Is that a disgrace? Often when listening to what was passing around me, I have been inclined to consider it as a compliment.

CHAPTER XIII.

Breakfast at the duke of Penthièvre's—Account of the marriage of the duke of Chartres—The king's repugnance to it—The Carmelites—M. Prati—Verses—Gross flattery—The duchess of Chartres' visit to the countess du Nord—Mesdames de Lœwestine and de Genlis—Establishment of St. Sulpice—Gift of the czarina—The Boutin folly—The count du Nord and M. Necker—Madame Necker and her daughter—M. de Condorcet—Incident at Madame de Montesson's—Her marriage with the duke of Orleans—Remark of Madame du Barry—M. de Caumartin—Mdlles. Dugazon, Colombe, Lescot, and the Italian opera—Theatricals at Trianon—The queen speaks to me—At supper I sit next to Madame Elizabeth—Conversation about the Lort family—The female philosopher, author of thirty-two volumes.

3rd June.—THE countess du Nord was so very kind as to call for me at an early hour this morning to bring me to Sceaux, the residence of the duke de Penthièvre. She was to breakfast there, and insisted upon my going with her. I had no reason to regret my compliance. I visited a delightful abode: I saw the most virtuous, the best of princes, and the most charming of princesses. The count de Penthièvre, son to the count de Toulouse, and grandson to Louis the Fourteenth, is certainly the most perfect man on earth. He lives at Sceaux in a charming retreat, far from the court, far from

intrigues. He is not yet consoled, and never will be consoled for the death of his only son, the prince de Lamballes. His is a grief that is beyond description, as it is beyond comfort. His only remaining child is the duchess de Chartres, who has inherited her father's goodness and virtues, as well as his immense fortune.

The marriage of Mdlle. de Penthièvre, brilliant as was the connexion, took place against her father's will. Certainly the match was a great one. The first prince of the blood did great honour to an illegitimate race in allying himself with them. However, the prince de Penthièvre did not desire the distinction. He did not admire the duke de Chartres, and the happiness of his child was dearer to him than a brilliant connexion. The abbé de Breteuil, chancellor to the duke of Orleans, was the first who conceived the idea of this union, but the duke of Orleans was not inclined to consent. The prince de Lamballes was then alive, and the duke did not think the fortune of Mdlle. de Penthièvre large enough to wipe away the stain of illegitimacy. Things continued in this state until the fatal illness of the poor prince de Lamballes. Then the abbé de Breteuil brought the matter again upon the tapis, and by the irresistible argument of a large fortune triumphed over the repugnance of the duke of Orleans. He

begged the duke de Choiseul to arrange the affair. During these proceedings, the prince de Condé asked the hand of Mdlle. de Penthièvre for the duke of Bourbon, and he also applied to the minister to further his aim. The duke de Choiseul did not conceal from him that his services were already engaged by the house of Orleans, and so gave him very little hopes of success. The duke de Penthièvre had in fact accepted the Orleans' offer, arranged all his affairs, and made his will in favour of his daughter, but refused to give at that time more than fifty thousand crowns a year. The friends of Orleans exclaimed. M. de Penthièvre replied that his son lived still—that though the physicians despaired of him God could work a miracle. The health of the prince was in fact improving. The duke of Orleans then withdrew his proposition, pleading the smallness of the fortune. The duke de Penthièvre became furious; the duke de Choiseul was also very angry with the duke of Orleans, and declared that during his life he would never again meddle with his affairs. The prince de Condé, observant of all these proceedings, thought the moment favourable to urge his suit; the duke de Choiseul spoke for him. The duke de Penthièvre would have perhaps yielded, but just at this time his son died. Then the Orleans family again came forward; every calculation was

made; the property of this house united to that of Mdlle. de Penthièvre would amount to more than eight millions yearly; such a prize ought not be allowed to escape. On the other hand, M. de Penthièvre, offended though he was, felt the advantage of the connexion; but what, above all, induced him to consent was the decided inclination of his daughter for the alliance. She had seen the duke de Chartres once at the house of Madame de Modène; he handed her to her carriage; and she declared, on returning to her convent, that she would never marry any but him.

But the great difficulty was to obtain the consent of the king. Whatever people may have said, and whatever they may still say, Louis the Fifteenth had common sense; he felt that this immense fortune would be a powerful lever in the hands of the first prince of the blood, and in times of revolt might become a dangerous weapon against the throne. He at first refused to consent. M. de Choiseul had much trouble to persuade him.

"Sire, the elders have the crown, which places them beyond all rivalry."

"Take care, duke, of giving the youngers the means of snatching it from them."

The king refused for a long time, and at length yielded only to the entreaties of the duke de Penthièvre, for whom he entertained a friendship

commenced in childhood. Still this consent was accompanied by restrictions and repeated observations.

"You are wrong, cousin; the duke de Chartres has a bad temper, is a man of bad habits, he is a libertine. Your daughter will not be happy; do not be in a hurry, wait."

The princess, however, was in a hurry; her father adored her, he yielded, and the marriage took place. Both father and daughter have often since had occasion to remember the words of the old king.

All this did not render our fête at Sceaux less charming. The duchess de Chartres did the honours with extreme amiability. Fountains and jets-d'eau played in every direction. We made the tour of these beautiful grounds in open carriages drawn by six horses, and in which almost all the ladies found places. The society was very select—the breakfast was magnificent. The duke de Penthièvre is adored by his vassals, who are loaded with his benefits. There is not an unhappy person at Sceaux. During the drive, their highnesses were everywhere greeted with enthusiastic cries of joy; I have never heard the like. How delightful it is to be loved as the good prince de Penthièvre is by his vassals!

On returning to Paris I went to meet the

Countess Skawronski, with whom I dined. We had made an appointment to visit the different churches. We went first to the two that are dedicated to St. Geneviève, then to the cathedral Nôtre Dame, le Val de Grâce, and lastly to the Carmelite church. We there admired the superb picture of Madame de la Vallière, representing the Virgin. It is there that this celebrated sinner finished her life in penitence and repentance, after thirty-eight years passed in retreat and tears. It is touching to reflect on this; and no one thinks of reproaching her with faults which have been so bitterly lamented. We afterwards paid some visits, and supped with the countess du Nord. Nothing was talked of during supper but Sceaux and its owners. Our praises were inexhaustible. The count du Nord retained the most tender recollection of the good duke de Penthièvre. That was indeed a prince according to his own heart.

4th June.—Went to visit the countess du Nord, who showed me a ballad and a rondo for the harpsichord, which had been presented to her the same morning by a musical composer, named M. Prati. They were ornamented with the ciphers of the countess du Nord (Marie Federowna), and those of her husband (Paul Petrowitz), designed with great taste and elegance. Within the letters M. F. the following verses were inserted:—

Like the sweet flowers round her springing,
Bright and gentle Marie beams;
Nobly graceful, soft and winning,
Like the youngest Grace she seems.

Between the strokes of the letters P. P. the following lines were inserted:—

When Europe Asia's victor saw
O'er Russia rule by wholesome law,
She wondering gazed; her wonder rose,
When regal power aside he throws,
Could ev'ry tempting lure withstand,
And knowledge seek from land to land.
His crown shall now descend to you,
And with his crown his genius too.

The duchess de Chartres arrived in the midst of this discourse, accompanied by the countess de Lœwestine, lady in waiting. The air and manner of the princess pleased and touched me still more than on the previous evening. Her smile is sad, and her eyes have a melancholy expression: when she ceases to speak, she sighs and seems lost in thought. She loves her children passionately, and one of her greatest causes of vexation is to see herself supplanted by Madame de Genlis in the direction of their education. I am not anxious to record scandals; but this exceeds all the rest. Madame de Genlis, or Madame de Sillery, is very beautiful, very intellectual, but certainly a little pedantic; she is a Mdlle. Necker refined. I do not know who has caricatured her armed with a

stick of barley-sugar and a rod. No representation could give a more correct idea of her character. Madame de Lœwestine is daughter to Madame de Genlis.

When the princess left, we went to visit the Gobelins, which I had already seen; but which I found pleasure in beholding again. The countess du Nord gave fifty louis to the workmen. We went afterwards to the establishments of the curé of St. Sulpice, which the countess du Nord examined minutely. The curé showed us everything himself, related a thousand interesting circumstances, and presented to the grand-duchess a golden medal that he had just received from the czarina, to whom he had sent a synopsis of his system. He was penetrated with gratitude, and lauded the empress to the skies.

"You are perfectly right," said the princess, "the empress is the mother of her subjects; she has the strongest intellect and the best heart in Europe."

I have never heard the countess du Nord speak otherwise of the empress. Those who fancied that she entertained different sentiments were mistaken. I did not do much on this day. I returned home early; their royal highnesses went to a private fête given by the duke of Orleans at his house in the Chaussée d'Antin.

5th June.—This was a very busy day. We were

obliged to rise early and dress hastily, the countess du Nord having declared that she would take no excuse, and that I should accompany her everywhere. Nothing could be more agreeable to me. My greatest happiness was to be with her, to see her as frequently as possible, knowing that I was not to enjoy this happiness long. We went before breakfast to visit the gardens of M. Boutin, *réceveur-général des finances*, privy councillor and treasurer to the Admiralty. He is brother to the *intendant des finances*, who was so much talked of at the time of the formation of the East India Company. He called his garden 'Tivoli;' but its popular appellation is 'Boutin's folly.' Folly it may well be called. He has expended or rather buried millions there. It is certainly a delightful place. At every step fresh wonders spring up: grottoes, groves, statues, and beautiful pavilions, furnished with princely luxury. It is only a king or financier who could indulge such expensive fancies. M. Boutin often gives suppers here, the elegance and luxury of which are in accordance with the sumptuous decorations of the place.

After having seen Tivoli, where we were served with milk and fruits in golden vessels, we went to pay another visit, much more interesting in my opinion; this was to M. and Madame Necker, at St. Ouen, where they had a country place. M.

Necker had quitted the *contrôle-général* in '81, after his celebrated *compte rendu*. His disgrace or his retreat has made much noise in Europe Opinions are divided about him; some praise him to the skies, whilst others blame him excessively. Whatever may be my sympathy for a Protestant, I must confess that M. Necker, after having spoken so much of diminishing the taxes, increased them. His enemies seem to have some grounds for accusing him of charlatanism. The count du Nord conversed for an hour *tête-à-tête* with him.

"I am come," said he, on entering the apartment, "to join my tribute of admiration to that of all Europe."

It appeared to me that his highness, on quitting *le grand homme*, was a little less enthusiastic. He asked us in the carriage whether we knew the fable of the sticks floating in the water. This remark from the lips of the grand-duke was sufficient evidence of his opinion.

As to me, M. Necker's personal appearance did not please me. I was struck by his extraordinary likeness to Cagliostro. He does not, however, possess the Neapolitan's sparkling glance and spirit-striking expression. He was a mummied Cagliostro, of stiff and disagreeable aspect—a mere Geneva burgher. Madame Necker was still worse. Notwithstanding the high position she has occupied,

she is a tutoress, and nothing more. She is pedantic and conceited beyond all bounds. Daughter of a village parson named Churchod, she received an excellent education, from which she drew a sort of perverse advantage. She is handsome, and not agreeable; benevolent, and not loved. Her body, her mind, her heart, are deficient in grace. It seems as if the Almighty, before uniting her body to her soul, had steeped both the one and the other in a bucket of starch water. She has never possessed the art of pleasing. In a word, she knows neither how to weep nor smile. Her father was poor; she opened a boarding-school for young girls at Geneva. She was brought to Paris by Madame de Vermenoux, celebrated for her beauty and gallantry. This Madame de Vermenoux was intimate with the abbé Raynal, with M. Marmontel, with other philosophers, and, in short, with M. Necker. The latter soon wearied her; I can imagine the rest; he would have wearied me too. To get rid of him, she conceived the idea of marrying him to Mdlle. Churchod.

"They will weary one another," said she, "and that will be occupation for them."

But it was strangers they wearied, for they adored one another, and their mutual compliments and flatteries were unceasing. Each became a thurifer to the other, especially Madame Necker, who

burned large quantities of incense before her husband.

Mdlle. Necker appeared to me a very different person from her parents, although she, too, had something of the Genevese stamp, and swung her thurible with great industry. But for her eyes, which are splendid, one would almost say that she is ugly. Her figure is beautiful; she is very fair, and there is a sparkling intelligence in her glance. I formed an opinion of her then which has since been realized; she is and always will be a remarkable woman.

The count and countess du Nord were very gracious in their deportment towards this family; the grand-duchess in particular said so many amiable things about their retirement, and the manner in which it was supported, that Madame Necker fainted, so deeply was she affected. The amiability, grace, and judgment of the princess, won every heart.

This visit detained us until one o'clock. Their imperial highnesses were expected at the Academy of Sciences, where they were received by the most distinguished members. M. de Condorcet pronounced an emphatic, turgid, and conceited discourse. He entered into metaphysical discussions, very barren and weak in comparison to those of our German philosophers. The countess du Nord gave a sly

glance at me whilst he poured forth this bathos.

The count du Nord was presented with a piece of ivory, carved by Peter the Great, and of which he had made a present to the Academy in 1717: it had ever since occupied a distinguished place in the collection. As for us, during all this time we were dying of hunger, so that the grand-duke, through compassion, abridged his admiration and his praises. Their imperial highnesses were shown out with the same ceremony with which they had been received; but I can never forget Madame de Beckendorf, who, being *enciente*, had a perpetual appetite. Even whilst making her courtesy, she continued to nibble furtively a piece of bread that she had drawn from her pocket. She seemed like a little girl, afraid of the rod; the grand-duchess could scarcely refrain from laughter at the sight.

We sat at table like starving people. During dinner, the conversation turned upon the entertainment of the previous evening given by the duke d'Orleans, or rather by Madame de Montesson. The supper had been magnificent. The count du Nord had been rather ill, and did not stay for supper, neither did the grand-duchess. Their absence was a serious mortification to Madame de Montesson. A little incident had occurred at the arrival of the princess, which annoyed her, and

vexed seriously the duke d'Orleans and the mistress of the house. Whilst Comus was making his rounds, before the comedy, several persons had the indiscretion to take the best places in the theatre, without awaiting the arrival of the countess du Nord; nor leaving a vacant place for her. The duke d'Orleans testified loudly and warmly his ill-humour, and, notwithstanding all the efforts of the grand-duchess, who was very sorry to be the cause of so much annoyance, the persons who had taken the places were obliged to resign them.

It was said at court that his serene highness, not being able to obtain permission from the king to make Madame de Montesson duchess of Orleans, had become himself M de Montesson. As far as appearances went nothing could be more true. The prince identified himself with the remarks, the quarrels, and petty hatreds of the marchioness; he saw only with her eyes, and certain it is that she had often made him forget his princely dignity. Madame de Montesson displayed in comedy much feeling and sensibility. She was a woman of talent, but cross and disagreeable when she wished. The reports relative to her birth did not agree; some said she was noble, others plebeian, according to the likings or antipathies of the different parties. She had been first known as Mdlle. de la Haye, and married the duke de Montesson, a doting old

man, for the sake of his name and property. She won the affections of the duke d'Orleans, a worthy prince, but very dull. Before knowing this lady, his sole passion had been a devotion to the pleasures of the table. Madame de Montesson had the address to keep him in her train, and to make a great display of virtue until the death of her husband, when his serene highness made her a proposal of marriage. The cunning puss accepted it, and paid great court to Madame du Barry during the life of Louis XV. Marriage was the aim and object of Madame du Barry. The degradation of the royal family weighed little with her; and were the king inclined to marry her, she was incapable of that patriotic devotedness which, by refusing such an offer, would have saved the crown from being, so to say, trampled in the mud. It is well known that she said on this occasion, in her vulgar cant, to the duke d'Orleans, who prayed her intercession with the king,—

"Marry first, *gros père*—we will consider afterwards."

He did marry, but he could never obtain permission from the king to declare his marriage; on the contrary, his majesty gave him to understand that if Madame de Montesson attempted, in any way, to take precedence of women of rank, he would, without ceremony, order her to be shut up in the

Bastille. This decree was irrevocable; the prince complained, almost aloud. He was distractedly in love with the lady, and was in despair at not being able to give her the rank due to her charms. He gave her, at least, a fortune equivalent to her pretensions, for he expended extravagant sums of money for her, both at Sainte-Assise and at Paris.

Amongst the performers favoured by Madame de Montesson, was M. de Caumartin, *maître des requêtes*, and son of the *prévôt des marchands*.* He was a young man of about thirty years of age, very agreeable, and a great favourite with ladies of all ranks. One of the ulcers of society, which is every day becoming more envenomed, and which will prove fatal if a remedy be not applied, is the attention paid by gentlemen to actresses and to women who disregard the ties of marriage. They devote a great deal of their time to them, not publicly, for they dare not do that, but in private. How many men ruin their properties to deck such women with gold and jewels! It is an unparalleled scandal, repugnant to every upright mind, and to which no remedy has been yet applied, notwithstanding the lamentations of families. I have no desire to set myself up as a moralist, but I confess

* A rank corresponding to that of lord mayor of London. —*Editor's Note.*

that I have often congratulated myself upon not having a son, that I may be free of this and other embarrassments.

5th June.—I retired immediately after dinner to make my toilette, as I purposed going to the Italian Opera. I took a place in the box of the countess de Hallwill. The piece was 'the Samnite Marriages.' It was not very amusing, but there are at the Italian Opera three charming actresses, Mdlles. Dugazon, Colombe, and Lescot.

The first is very handsome, and plays with much spirit.

The second has a lovely face, and a magnificent figure.

The third is very graceful and artless in her appearance. The following couplets have been made upon these three ladies:—

C'est pour l'indolente richesse
Que l'on inventa les sophas:
Mais vers ce lit de la mollesse
Mes désirs ne me portent pas.
Je préfère la belle nature
A tous les coussins d'édredon,
Qui fait le mieux, je vous le jure
Parler d'amour, c'est *Dugazon.*
Circé, changeant l'homme en oiseau,
D'un seul coup de baguette,
Fourmit la femelle au moineau,
Le mâle à la fauvette;
Chez elle, il faut s'appareiller:
Qu'elle me transforme en ramier,
Car j'aime la *Colombe.*

En prenant des bains dans un fleuve,
Mon mal de nerfs doit s'affaiblir,
Je brûle de tenter l'épreuve,
Mais quel fleuve dois-je choisir?
L'eau du Rhin n'est pas assez pure,
Le Danube a trop de froidure,
Le Sénégal serait trop chaud,
Je le vois, le mal que j'endure
Ne peut guérir que par l'*Escot*.

There is too much freedom of language and thought in these verses; but I cite them in support of what I said a while ago. A spirit of unbridled licence is abroad. The free-and-easy manners which gentlemen acquired in the society of these *demoiselles* has spread their contagion in circles within which deference should never be laid aside. Loose expressions are used in presence of the most respectable women. This is a trait of manners that I would not wish to omit, and of which the source is very remote. Volumes may be written on this truth, which is *too true*, as Figaro says.

6th June.—Mdlle. Schneider awoke me this morning at six o'clock. This poor Schneider has never been able to learn a word of French, even in Paris, and makes incessantly the most comical blunders. She announces one name instead of another; says that I am ill when I am perfectly well; and a week since, made every exertion to induce me to swallow a dose of medicine that had been brought for M. d'Oberkirch, declaring that the

apothecary had said that it was for me, and that apothecaries ought to be obeyed. I had some difficulty in convincing her that the stuff was not for me.

This blessed 6th of June she awakened me at the earliest dawn: I was to get my hair dressed, and make a grand toilette, in order to go to Versailles, whither the queen had invited the countess du Nord, for whose amusement a comedy was to be performed. These court toilettes are never-ending, and this road from Paris to Versailles very fatiguing, especially when one is in continual fear of rumpling her petticoat and flounces. I tried that day, for the first time, a new fashion—one, too, which was not a little *gênante*. I wore in my hair little flat bottles shaped to the curvature of the head; into these a little water was poured, for the purpose of preserving the freshness of the natural flowers worn in the hair, and of which the stems were immersed in the liquid. This did not always succeed, but when it did the effect was charming. Nothing could be more lovely than the floral wreath crowning the snowy pyramid of powdered hair.

The countess du Nord was already in her apartment at the château when I arrived. I met the queen in the antechamber; she had just left the

princess. When I made a curtsy, she had the goodness to notice me, and did me the honour of saying, with her customary grace, that she expected to see me that evening at Trianon.

"I shall have much pleasure in seeing you there, baroness," added she; "the countess du Nord speaks too frequently of you not to make us wish to see you very often."

The grand-duchess, to whom I repeated these words, did me the honour of saying that nothing could be more gratifying to her, and that she would not fail to thank the queen.

"A kindness done to my dear Lanele is more gratifying to me than if offered to myself."

These were her very words. I was deeply affected. Friendship is a sentiment so rare in persons of her rank: but princes certainly need great discrimination to avoid being duped by their pretended friends. Self-interest is the universal touchstone and spring of action. Has God created man so egotistical, or is it the corruption of the times that has rendered him such? I leave it to wiser heads than mine to decide the question.

'Zémire and Azore,' this delightful opera of M. Grétry, was performed at Trianon. The singing was enchanting. Her majesty is a very good musician, and pupil of the Chevalier Glück. The

little theatre at Trianon is a gem: the splendour of the diamonds was dazzling to behold.

After 'Zémire and Azore,' 'La jeune Française au Sérail' was performed. This is a ballet *en action*, by the elder Sieur Gardel, ballet-master to the queen. The dances were lively and graceful, the costumes admirable, and the actors still more admirable than the costumes. The court was radiant that day. The countess du Nord wore upon her head a little bird made of precious stones, so brilliant that no eye could gaze upon it steadily. It was fixed upon a spring; the slightest movement of the wearer put it into motion, when it fluttered its wings above the rose on which it seemed to be perched. The queen admired it so much that she ordered a similar one for herself.

Supper was laid on three tables; places for a hundred persons at each table. I had the honour of being placed near Madame Elizabeth, and of beholding, at my ease, this pious princess. In the splendour of youth and beauty she refused every matrimonial alliance, that she might not be separated from her family.

"I could only marry the son of a king," said she; "and the son of a king should one day reign over the dominions of his father. I would be no longer French. I would not wish to give up my claim

to my country: it is better to remain here at the foot of my brother's throne than to sit upon a foreign one."

She did me the honour of speaking a great deal with me about the family de Lort, having known the mother at court and the daughter at St. Cyr. Madame Elizabeth still remembered this circumstance, I do not know how, and made it the subject of a very agreeable conversation.* The queen did me the honour of speaking to me several times, and of taking part in my conversation with the princess, whose remarks she caught notwithstanding the numbers who spoke around.

The company afterwards descended to the gardens to see the illuminations, which were magnificent. Trianon is certainly an enchanting spot; and yet the gardens of many private individuals have cost more, for example, the 'Boutin folly,' 'St. James's folly,' the 'Beaujeu folly,' the park of 'Brunoy,' and many others. The queen has been accused of expending the public money on extravagant follies, because she got a Swiss hamlet built in her garden. What an extravagant ex-

* The daughters of the baron de Lort were, the countess de Lort, canoness, who became 'intendante de la maison impériale et royale de l'éducation,' founded at Milan by Napoleon; the countess de Bernhausen, and a third sister.—*Editor's Note.*

penditure for the queen of France!!! Ah, envy, bitter envy is the secret cause of many of these outbursts of pretended justice.

7th June.—I returned from Versailles just in time for dinner. I had recovered the fatigue of the previous evening, and had walked a little in the park. After a conjugal dinner, I went to the house of an *ébeniste,* named Pricourt, who made furniture of wondrous beauty: he showed us all kinds. I passed two hours there so agreeably that I was scarcely in time for the opera, whither I accompanied the countess du Nord, who wished to see 'Thésée' again. My princess was delighted with the fête of the previous evening, and spoke incessantly of the queen and her kind attentions.

"How I should like to live with her, and how delighted I would be if the count du Nord were dauphin of France, without ceasing to be czar!" added she, smiling. "I feel constantly the embarrassment of rank,—how it thwarts the affections!"

She gave me afterwards some very strange verses, which she had just received. I transcribe them with their conceited title:—

A Prediction for the Countess du Nord, by a Female Philosopher, author of thirty-two volumes.

The star of the north, whose soft-beaming ray
Throws over our court a radiance so bland,
Seems to pause in its orbit, as willing to stay,
And fix its abode in our happy land.

As it rises serene the clouds are dispersed,
Apollo himself seems retracing his track,
Recalling the rays that in showers were immersed,
And leading young spring time all-blushingly back.

It was not worth while to write thirty-two volumes to acquire the right to print a thirty-third of such nonsense as this.

END OF VOL. I.

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